

**THE ROLE OF FORMAL AND INFORMAL HRM POLICIES AND PRACTICES  
IN MANAGING WORK AND FAMILY CONFLICT: THE PERSPECTIVE OF  
BHUTANESE SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES**

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Masters in Management Studies  
Post Graduate Certificate in Education  
B.Com (Hons)

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Business (Research)

School of Management

Queensland University of Technology

Brisbane, Australia

2016



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## **Definitions of Major Terms**

### **Work and Family Conflict**

Work–family conflict is a form of inter-role conflict that has been defined as the “simultaneous occurrence of two or more sets of pressures such that compliance with one would make compliance with the other more difficult” (Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, Snoek, & Rosenthal, 1964, p.19).

### **Formal Human Resource Management Policies and Practices**

Formal human resource management policies and practices are defined as those “identifiable policies, rules and regulations that are documented and integrated into the organisation’s human resource management system” (Marlow, 2006, p.468).

### **Informal Human Resource Practices**

Informal HR practices are defined as “a process of workforce engagement, collective and/ or individual, based mainly on unwritten customs and the tacit understanding that arises out of the interaction of the parties at work” (Ram, Edwards, Gilman, & Arrowsmith, 2001, p.846).

### **Family Friendly Policies and Practices**

Family friendly policies and practices are human resource guidelines and initiatives provided by organisations to support employees to make arrangements to balance their work and family demands (Allen, 2001).

### **Small and Medium Enterprises**

Small and medium enterprises are businesses that maintain revenues, assets or a number of employees below a certain threshold (Dundon, Grugulis, & Wilkinson,

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1999). The current study adopts the definition of small and medium enterprises from the Bhutanese context that defines them as those enterprises employing between 5-19 employees (RGoB, 2012).

### **Organisational Commitment**

Organisational commitment is defined as “multidimensional in nature, involving an employee’s loyalty to the organisation, willingness to exert effort on behalf of the organisation, degree of goal and value congruency with the organisation, and desire to maintain membership” (Bateman & Strasser, 1984, p.97).

### **Organisational Citizenship Behaviour**

Organisational citizenship behaviour is defined as “individual behavior that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognised by the formal reward system, and that in the aggregate promotes the effective functioning of the organisation” (Organ, 1988, p.548).

### **Co-worker support**

Co-worker support is defined as “the extent that individuals view other workers at their organisation as being helpful and supportive of them” (Liao, Joshi, & Chuang, 2004, p.37).

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## **Abstract**

Work and family conflict claims to undermine the overall wellbeing of employees in many countries. In response, many organisations have implemented a variety of initiatives to address work and family conflict issues. This current research study, through two studies, examines the link between employees' utilisation of formal and informal human resource policies and practices and work and family conflict in Bhutanese small and medium enterprises.

Study 1 identifies the current formal and informal human resource policies and practices that help minimise work and family conflict through interviews with 10 employers/managers and 20 employees from 10 small and medium enterprises. The findings revealed that informal flexible working hour arrangement was the most prevalent practice used by the employees in managing balance between work and family demands. In addition, support from co-workers also appears to play a significant role to help employees reduce work and family conflict.

Study 2 investigates the link between utilisation of informal flexible working hour arrangements with both work interference with family and family interference with work and a set of work-related outcomes: Organisational commitment and Organisational citizenship behaviour. Further, this study also examines the impact of employees' experience of co-worker support on work interference with family and family interference with work and overall impact on organisational commitment and organisational citizenship behaviour. With a quantitative research design, this study adopted a cross-sectional online survey method of data collection with a sample size of 318 from the Bhutanese small and medium enterprises. Previously tested and validated self-administered survey instruments were used to collect data from the

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employees. Structural Equation Modelling analysis was performed to test the research hypotheses.

Results from the second study revealed that utilisation of informal flexible working hours showed to significantly predict the variability in both work interference with family and family interference with work. Co-worker support on the other hand was found to significantly predict only work interference with family but not family interference with work. However, the results indicated that work interference with family and family interference with work do not mediate the proposed relationships. Nevertheless, both independent and mediating variables showed to predict some important dimensions of organisational commitment and organisational citizenship behaviour independently.

This research study contributes to the body of work and family and Human Resource Management policy and practice literature by extending our understanding of the relationship between informal human resource management practices and co-worker support with work and family conflict in the context of emerging economy.

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## **Statement of Original Authorship**

The work contained in this thesis has not been previously submitted to meet requirements for an award at this or any other higher education institution. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made.

Signature:      QUT Verified Signature

Date:            November 2016

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## **Acknowledgements**

Though only my name appears on the cover of this dissertation, a great many people have contributed to its production. I owe my gratitude to all those people who have made this dissertation possible and because of whom my research experience has been one that I will cherish forever.

My deepest gratitude is to my Principal Supervisor: Associate Professor Vicky Browning, and Associate Supervisor: Professor Lisa Bradley, who have enthusiastically guided me to recover when my steps faltered throughout this research. I thank Dr Jonathan Bader for his support during various stages of my research journey. I also thank the HDR staff for their continuous and timely support.

I remain grateful to my Director General and Deans of Gaeddu College of Business Studies who kindly assisted me directly or indirectly throughout this research. Further, I acknowledge Jane Todd for professional copy editing and proofreading advice as covered in the Australian Standards for Editing Practice, Standards D and E. Finally, I thank my family for their emotional and moral support which inspired me to continuously stand committed till the end of this journey.



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## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

### **1.1 Background to the Research**

Societal changes in family structures and in the demographic composition of the workforce during the past few decades have had major implications for both family and workplace domains (Boris & Lewis, 2006; Eby, Casper, Lockwood, Bordeaux, & Brinley, 2005; Halpern, 2005; Offerman & Gowing, 1990; Parasuraman & Greenhaus, 2002; Perry-Jenkins, Repetti, & Crouter, 2000). The increased participation of women in the workforce and the growing numbers of dual-earner and single-parent households has resulted in the traditional family household (described as a married single-earner male with a non-employed wife and children) becoming a minority group (Gonzales, Jain, Kochhar & Newiak, 2015; Chaudhary & Verick, 2014; Mujahid, Muhammed & Norman, 2013; Bond, Thompson, Galinsky, & Prottas, 2002; Parasuraman & Greenhaus, 1997; Parasuraman & Greenhaus, 2002; Zedeck & Mosier, 1990). Statistics show that many Americans are balancing multigenerational care as they are given responsibilities for both their children and their parents (Belden, Russonello, & Stewart, 2001; Durity, 1991; Neal & Hammer, 2007; Pierret, 2006). These changes in family structure and workforce demographics have forced employees to balance dual demands from both the work and family domains.

Due to the competing demands between work and family, interference between the work and family domains often occurs, resulting in work and family conflict. Work and family conflict is shown to comprise of two distinct but related forms of inter-role conflict focusing not only on how work interferes with family, but also on how

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family interferes with work (Frone, Russell, & Cooper, 1992; Netemeyer, Boles, & McMurrian, 1996). Work-family conflict is defined as a form of inter-role conflict occurring as a result of general demands and strain created by the work interfering with one's ability to perform family related responsibilities – work interferes with family life (Netemeyer et al., 1996). In contrast, Netemeyer et al. (1996) defines the family–work conflict as role conflict resulting from general demands and strain created by the family interfering with an employee's ability to perform work-related responsibilities – family interfering with work. Such conflict occurs when the responsibilities in one domain (work or family) makes performing the responsibilities of the other domain (work or family) more difficult, thereby preventing the individual from meeting their obligations in the domain.

A significant amount of attention has been received from scholars and researchers examining the consequences of work and family conflict (Adams, King, & King, 1996; Frye & Breaugh, 2004; Luk & Shaffer, 2005; Major, Klein, Ehrhart, 2002) and their findings reveal negative effects on both employees and organisations. For example, depression, stress, lower productivity, poorer work quality, higher absenteeism and employee turnover are frequently cited as consequences of work and family conflict (Anderson, Coffey, & Byerly, 2002).

Acknowledging the severity of the consequences of work and family conflict, studies have started concentrating on exploring ways and means to help manage the conflict with the aim of promoting employees' work–family balance. Research undertaken in Western developed countries has shown that utilisation of formal family friendly policies has a positive impact on a range of employee and organisational outcomes, such as increased satisfaction with work and family, reduced work and family conflict, lower job related stress, and increased organisational commitment



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(Anderson et al., 2002; Baltes, Briggs, Huff, Wright, & Neuman, 1999; Berry & Rao, 1997; Scheibl & Dex, 1998).

Scholars like Urbano and Yordanova (2008) and Hornsby and Kuratko (2003) have proposed that varieties of formal and informal human resource management policies and practices (e.g., leave, flexible working arrangements, employer supported dependent care) have a potential to effectively manage work and family demands. They argue that implementing family friendly policies and practices can shape employees' capacity to manage work and family demands more effectively.

Several studies have examined the impact of human resource management practices on work to family conflict and some on family to work conflict (Hall & Richter, 1988; Poelmans, Kalliath, & Brough, 2008; Porter & Ayman, 2010). However, most of these studies were undertaken in Western developed societies with a specific focus on formal human resource management policy and practices, where the effect of informal human resource management practices was given less consideration. Hornsby and Kuratko (2003) argue that both formal and informal human resource policies and practices have a potential to achieve positive outcomes related to both employees and the organisation. To date, very few studies (Georgiadis & Pitelis, 2012; Porter & Ayman, 2010; Songini & Gnan, 2013) have attempted to investigate the link between the formal as well as the informal human resource management policies and practices and work–family related issues. Findings from their studies indicate that employees derive benefits in managing work and family conflict by utilising human resource management policies and practices.

This research study aims to examine the link between formal and informal human resource management policies and practices with the management of work and family conflict in the context of small and medium enterprises in the emerging

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economy of Bhutan. The research will contribute to a more global understanding of the impact of human resource management practices in managing balance between work and family conflict beyond the dominant focus on Western countries. Investigation of the effects of human resource management practices on work and family conflict is significant for small and medium enterprises in the context of an emerging economy since small and medium enterprises play a vital role in generating employment and income. Earlier studies (Forth, Bewley, & Bryson, 2006; Marlow, Taylor, & Thompson, 2010) have also shown that small and medium organisations are less likely to initiate and use formal policies. In other words, small and medium organisations are shown to rely heavily on informal practices in managing their business, while large organisations usually adopt formal policies (Barrett & Mayson, 2007).

Previous studies have shown that employees who utilise human resource policies and practices are more likely to exhibit high organisational commitment and engage more in citizenship behaviour (Huselid, 1995). Organisational commitment and organisational citizenship behaviour are important employee related outcomes reported frequently in organisational research because organisations have increasingly recognised the potential of their employees to be a source of competitive advantage (Pfeffer, 1994). This current study will further aim to explore if employees who are able to manage balance between work and family conflict as the result of human resource management practices utilisation will report a higher level of organisational commitment and organisational citizenship behaviour in the context of small and medium enterprises. Organisations with a committed workforce and a workforce willing to engage in extra role behaviour are shown to have a competitive advantage (Bateman & Strasser, 1984; Mesu, Riemsdijk, & Sanders, 2009).

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The current research thesis is made up of two studies. Study one aims to identify the current human resource management policies and practices that help manage the balance between work and family demands among the employees of Bhutanese small and medium enterprises. The findings from Study one will form the basis for establishing the focus of and the design of the questionnaire for the second study. This second study will examine the link between the human resource management practices and employees' experiences of work and family conflict as the result of the level of employee utilisation of human resource management practices and the impact this has on their level of organisational commitment and organisational citizenship behaviour.

## **1.2 Significance of the Study**

With the growing diversity of family structures represented in today's workforce, particularly with the growing norm of dual-career families, the importance of an employee managing the balance between work and family commitments has increased markedly over the past 20 years (Rawlings, Omole, & Festus, 2012). The current study will contribute to the literature about how people can manage their work and family responsibilities by exploring the current understanding of and attitude towards the issue of work and family conflict among employees in small and medium enterprises in Bhutan. Further, the study will investigate the influence of formal and informal human resource management policies and practices to assist employees to manage this conflict. The back ground to each of these contributions will now be briefly discussed.

Despite the fact that small and medium enterprises are considered to be the driving force behind the growth and vibrancy of any economy (Georgiadis & Pitelis, 2012),

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research on human resource management within small and medium enterprises is still limited. Small and medium enterprises play a crucial role in development of a country by providing significant employment opportunities (Tambunan, 2008). The available research on small and medium enterprises suggests that their human resource management systems are largely based on informal human resource practices (Patton, Marlow, & Hannon, 2000). However, only a few studies (Georgiadis & Pitelis, 2012; Porter & Ayman, 2010; Songini & Gnan, 2013) have attempted to examine the impact of both formal and informal human resource policies and practices on employee management of work and family responsibilities and these have been mainly in developed economies. Findings from their studies suggest that employees derive benefits in managing work and family conflict by utilising human resource management policies and practices. Therefore, it is important to examine how both formal and informal HR policies and practices play a role in shaping employee-related outcomes in small and medium enterprises in developing economies.

In particular, informal human resource practices have rarely been considered, but appear from studies (Georgiadis & Pitelis, 2012; Porter & Ayman, 2010; Songini & Gnan, 2013) to potentially play a large role in people being able to manage their work life balance. This is a gap in our current knowledge that this thesis will address. As stated, over the past three decades, there has been widespread scholarly interest in the concept of work and family conflict (Lee, Elke, & Dobson, 2009). While extant work and family conflict studies have significantly furthered our understanding of the phenomena, there is limited focus within these studies in emerging economies. There is ample scope for broadening work and family conflict research to politically and culturally diverse areas because of the adverse impact on employees' well-being

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and productivity. A study by Galay (2007) indicated that Bhutanese who are employed have been shown to experience a certain level of difficulty in balancing time between work and non-work activities. Bhutan, as an emerging and non-Western economy, provides an interesting country context to be explored in the current study. This thesis is significant as it will address the gap in the literature around work life balance practices in emerging economies.

### **1.3 Research Objectives**

The objectives of this study are:

1. To identify the current human resource policies and practices that help employees manage work and family conflict in Bhutanese small and medium enterprises.
2. To examine the link between employees' utilisation of formal and informal human resource policies and practices and their experiences of work and family conflict.
3. To investigate the relationship between employees' experience of work and family conflict with their level of organisational commitment and organisational citizenship behaviour as the result of the utilisation of human resource policies and practices.

### **1.4 Thesis Structure**

This thesis is structured into five chapters. Chapter One provides the background to the study; specifies the study problem and its significance and presents the research aims and objectives.

Chapter Two presents a review of the extant literature on the utilisation of human resource management policies and practices as a possible means to help reduce work and family conflict in the context of emerging economies. In addition, literature on organisational commitment and organisational citizenship behaviour is also

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reviewed. The chapter concludes by presenting a summary of the research gaps and conceptual framework to be examined.

The third chapter presents Study 1 which aims to identify the current HR policies and practices that help employees in Bhutanese small and medium enterprises to minimise work and family conflict. The chapter provides a detailed description of the method adopted for the study, presents and discusses the overall findings of Study 1 and the implications for the focus of Study 2.

Chapter Four provides a detailed description of the Study 2. The chapter commences by presenting a revised conceptual framework and additional review of the literature based on the findings from Study 1. The chapter then presents the research approach adopted in Study 2 to investigate the proposed hypotheses. The results of the quantitative analysis and discussion of the findings are also presented within this chapter.

Chapter Five discusses the key findings from Study 1 and Study 2. The chapter also highlights research contributions and implications of the findings concluding with the limitations of the study and future research directions.

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## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

### **2.1 Introduction**

The challenges of integrating work and family life are part of everyday reality for the majority of working families around the world. While the particulars may vary depending on income, occupation, or stage in life, these challenges cut across all socioeconomic levels and are felt directly by both women and men (Frone, 2003). As families contribute more hours to the paid workforce, problems have intensified, resulting in broad recognition that steps are needed to adjust to the changed realities of today's families and work. Most employees today, regardless of gender, have family responsibilities, and an employed spouse (Warner & Hausdorf, 2009). But jobs are often still designed as if workers have no family responsibilities. The culture and organisation of paid work, domestic care work, and community organisations remain predicated on the breadwinner-homemaker model (McNall, Masuda, & Nicklin, 2010). The new global economy, with its focus on 24/7 availability and long work hours, only worsens the problems generated by the lag in the organisation of paid work, as if workers were without personal interests or domestic care concerns (Wymenga, Spanikora, Barker, Konings & Canton, 2014; Clarkberg & Moen, 2001).

This chapter commences by reviewing literature that is relevant to this current study and also considers the research aims and the objectives. The broad areas of literature reviewed include work and family conflict; role conflict theory; effects of work and family conflict; organisational commitment; organisational citizenship behaviour; formal and informal human resource management policies and practices and human resource management in small and medium enterprises. Each of this literature will be discussed more in detail starting from section 2.2 below.

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Work and family life have always been interdependent, but the increased employment of women, rising hours of work required from employees due to the increase in the cost of living, the demands of globalising economy and the trend for women to develop careers has exacerbated this interdependence making it both more visible and more problematic (Gershuny & Robinson, 2007). The increased number of hours family members both individually and in total are contributing to the paid workforce means that both work and personal lives are not only under stress, but have changed in ways not anticipated by the assumptions, policies, and institutions that have previously shaped experiences in both work and family life (Kiger, 2011).

A study of the management of the work and family domains can be approached from two perspectives: enrichment or work and family conflict (Hill, Hawkins, Martinson, & Ferris, 2005). The enrichment perspective suggests that experiences in one role can produce positive experiences and outcomes in the other role (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). Marks (1977) has argued that participation in some roles creates energy that can be used to enhance experiences in other roles. Sieber (1974) has proposed that resources acquired in one role as a by-product of social relationships (e.g., recommendations to third parties, connections, inside tips) may be reinvested in other roles. Also, as individuals accumulate a variety of roles, their behaviour may be enhanced as they learn to be tolerant of discrepant views and flexible in adjusting to the demands of diverse role sources; they may then benefit from their expanded behaviour in all roles (Sieber, 1974). Previous studies have also shown that work experiences can improve the quality of one's family life and family experiences can also enhance the quality of one's work life (Carlson, Kacmar, Wayne, & Grzywacz, 2006). When resources acquired in the family domain enhance an individual's functioning in the work domain, the individual acknowledges the source of the



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benefit and thus experiences greater satisfaction with the domain seen as providing the benefit. However, not all researchers agree that transfer of experiences inevitably leads to positive outcomes, largely due to individuals' inability to manage multiple conflicting roles (Wayne, Musisca, & Fleeson, 2004), which leads to the conflict perspective, discussed below.

The conflict perspective assumes that work roles can interfere with roles and responsibilities in the family domain and family related roles can interfere with the work domain. With both work and family responsibilities, individuals are faced with a significant challenge when reconciling these demands. For the past twenty-five years much of the research on the work–family interface has emphasised conflict, stress and impaired wellbeing, and continues to be the dominant paradigm for the study of the work and family interface (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). Cognisance of this trend and the increasing stress and problems associated with both partners being engaged in the workforce, this study has also adopted a conflict approach to examine work and family issues in the context of small and medium enterprises in Bhutan.

## **2.2 Work and Family Conflict**

Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) define work and family conflict as “a form of friction in which role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect” (p.77). Earlier studies suggest that people will spend more time engaged in roles that are most important to them, therefore leaving less time for other roles, which increases the opportunity for the person to experience role conflict (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). The complexities involved in combining and managing work and family demands often leads to conflict between work and family domains (Nikandrou, Panayotopoulou, & Apospori, 2008). The negative consequences of

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conflict affecting families, employers and employees has led to the recognition of the problem of integrating work and family as a social phenomenon of the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Parasuraman & Greenhaus, 1997).

The work and family relationship is complicated and multidimensional in nature (Netemeyer et al., 1996). Conflict between work and family often manifest itself in an incompatible schedule, excessive work time demands and fatigue and irritability caused when an individual attempts to fulfill roles related to both work and family (Eagle, Miles, & Icenogle, 1997). If a person is frequently struggling to meet the demands at work because of interference from family, reduced quality of work life is reported and if a person is struggling to meet the demands for family because of work interference, reduced quality of family life is reported (McNall et al., 2010).

Earlier studies (e.g., Parasuraman, Purohit, Godshalk, & Beutell, 1996; Carlson, Kacmar, & Williams, 2000) have examined a variety of antecedents (e.g., role ambiguity, role conflict, demands in both the work and family domains) that could lead to this conflict. Their findings revealed that demands in both the work and family domains were significantly and positively related to work and family conflict. The conflict has also been found to relate to outcomes such as low job dissatisfaction, high turnover and low employee commitment (Burke, 1988; Greenhaus, Bedeian, & Mossholder, 1987), as well as to a decreased sense of well-being of the employees (Gutek, Searle, & Klepa, 1991). It is widely acknowledged that the conflict between work and family domains has adverse effects on employees' work–family balance (e.g., Kinnunen, Feldt, Geurts, & Pulkkinen, 2006).

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### **2.2.1 Work–Family Conflict and Family–Work Conflict Defined**

Family and work are two significant parts of most adult's life. The role expectations arising from both work and family may not always be compatible, which produces conflict between work and family roles (Netemeyer et al., 1996). Role conflict occurs as a result of simultaneous performance of mutually dependent roles that individuals participate in, with the related demands in terms of time and energy that each role requires (Eagle, Icenogle, Maes, & Miles, 1998). Role conflict is defined as the “simultaneous occurrence of two (or more) sets of pressures such that compliance with one would make more difficult compliance with the other” (Khan et al., 1964, p. 19). That is, the demands and pressures arising from one role make performance of the other role more difficult (Katz & Khan, 1978). Kahn et al. (1964) identified inter-role conflict as “a form of role conflict in which the sets of opposing pressures arise from participation in different roles” (p. 20).

Therefore, due to the incompatibility between roles, the demands arising from one role (family) lead to inter-role conflict with the demands arising from another role (work). There exists a strong premise that work–family conflict and family–work conflict are separate but interrelated forms of inter-role conflict (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Kahn et al., 1964; Netemeyer et al., 1996). Even though several sources of work and family conflict have been acknowledged, researchers largely agree that the general demands of a role, the time dedicated to a specified role, and the strain created by a specified role are key factors of work–family conflict and family–work conflict (Netemeyer et al., 1996).

Conflict between work and family domains takes two forms: role overload and role interference. Role overload “exists when growing demands on an individual's time and energy from two or more roles exceed the individual's capability to execute

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either role proficiently” (Conley & Woosley, 2000, p. 181). On the other hand, role interference “occurs when the demands from two or more roles conflict to the degree that the requirements of neither role can be satisfied” (Duxbury & Higgins, 1992, p. 52). The definition of work–family conflict and family–work conflict offered by Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) indicates the presence of incompatible role pressures; however, no causal direction of interference between roles is specified.

In this current study, it was important to distinguish between the directions of role interference to enhance understanding from both work and family conflict perspective. Role interference in work–family conflict is documented as being bi-directional in nature; that is, role strain may arise out of family interference with work as well as out of work interference with family (Duxbury, Higgins, & Lee, 1994). Interference occurs when the demands of two or more roles conflict to the degree that the requirements of neither role are satisfied.

Different scholars have developed theories to help explain conflict between the family and work domains. Duxbury, Higgins, and Lee (1994) noted that due to the complexity of linking the domains of work and family, no unifying theoretical framework exists in the work–family literature. Role conflict theory provides a way to understand work and family conflict (Kahn et al., 1964). An overview of this theory is presented below, along with an explanation of how the theory helps to explain the concept of work and family conflict.

### **2.3 Role Conflict Theory**

Role conflict theory has been the dominant theoretical paradigm to study work and family interface and is rooted in the broader concept of role theory (Eby, Casper, Lockwood, Bordeaux, & Brinley, 2005). In general, role conflict theory recognises

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that individuals occupy multiple roles simultaneously, such as worker, parent and caretaker. Role conflict theory argues that a person has finite resources and the multiple roles a person occupies all compete for these resources, inevitably placing the roles in conflict. Resources spent in one role must necessarily come at the expense of the other role, thereby resulting in negative outcomes from the stress and strain of juggling demands (Barnett, Marshall, & Sayer, 1992; Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Hill et al., 2005; Murphy & Zagorski, 2006).

From a role conflict perspective, as individuals take on multiple life roles, it becomes increasingly difficult to successfully manage each role because time and resources spent in one role necessitate time and resources away from the other. Thus, the navigation of multiple roles, especially those of worker and family member, results in inter-role conflict, usually from the spill over of demands in one role to those of another (Kahn et al., 1964). Inter-role conflict occurs when compliance with one role is incompatible with the full compliance of another role (Adams et al., 1996; Thomas & Ganster, 1995). This may be brought about by the requirements of different roles competing for a person's limited resources, such as time, money, or space (Greenhaus & Kopelman 1981).

Important to role conflict theory is the assumption that work and family are separate and incompatible roles, and that the relationship between work and family comprises a zero-sum entity (Hillbrecht, Shaw, Johnson, & Andrey, 2008). This means that resources, notably time and energy, used in fulfilling one role's requirements no longer exist to fulfill requirements for a different role. This assumption originates from the scarcity hypothesis, which emphasises that resources such as time and energy are fixed and of limited quantity (Barnett et al., 1992; Hillbrecht et al., 2008; Murphy & Zagorski, 2006).

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In effect, a person with multiple roles has greater demands on their fixed time and energy, such that when resources are used in one role, resources are depleted and unavailable for use in another role. For example, energy used in the work role will deplete the amount of energy left to fulfill the family role and vice versa. This lack of energy to fulfill role responsibilities results in tension and conflict that produces an associated cost. This cost is assessed by various outcomes of psychological distress, for example, decreased organisational commitment and job satisfaction (Bagger, Li, & Gutek, 2008).

In summary, role conflict theory provides a useful framework to understand how individuals attempt to balance multiple roles. The focus for the current research is on the two roles of work and family. There is evidence that multiple roles lead to perceptions of conflict and overload and have negative repercussions for the well-being and performance of employees (Alpert & Culbertson, 1987; Burke, 1988; Frone et al., 1992). Role conflict theory argues that work and family conflict may arise in three different forms: time based, strain based and behaviour based (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Each of these forms of conflict will now be discussed.

### **2.3.1 Time-Based Conflict**

The first form is time-based conflict, which occurs when the time dedicated to satisfying duties in one domain limits the amount of time accessible to execute roles in the other domain (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). By the simple fact that people cannot be in two places at once, fulfilling work responsibilities may not allow for the flexibility needed to meet family role expectations. Pleck, Staines, and Lang (1980) suggest that dimensions of time in the form of extremely demanding working hours and work schedules are considered time-based conflict dimensions, which lead to

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role overload. The nature and amount of work and family conflict that an individual experiences is expected to increase in direct proportion to the hours the individual spends in each role. A meta-analytic study conducted by Byron (2005) found a significant relationship is reported between the number of hours worked and work and family conflict. Certain job features such as requiring long hours and the lack of employee control over time will influence time-based conflict. Working parents would struggle to find time to fulfill both roles (McNall et al., 2010).

There are two types of time-based conflict. The first type of time-based work and family conflict occurs when time demands associated with one role restrict the amount of time that can be devoted to the other role, inhibiting one's performance in the latter role (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). For example, parents spending time at work is likely to deprive their children from spending time with their parents. The second type of time-based work and family conflict occurs when pressures from one role create a preoccupation with that role, making it more difficult to meet the demands of another role. A person may be physically able to complete responsibilities stemming from multiple roles, but an emotional preoccupation makes this more challenging. This type of conflict can take many forms, depending on the work and family variables involved (Bartolome & Evans, 1979). For example, an employee may be present at work but continuously preoccupied and worried about a sick family member at home. In this case, the time-based conflict materialises because of a mental preoccupation from one role, making it more difficult to complete the responsibilities of another role. Time-based conflict therefore involves the transfer of limited personal resources such as time, attention and energy from one role to another. The implication of this is that the transfer of time or attention from

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one role ultimately results in the demands of that role being unfulfilled (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000).

Sources of time-based conflict may be work-related or family-related. Work-related sources of conflict may arise because of unfriendly family policies and practices such as demands for long working hours, rigid work schedules and inflexible working arrangements. Previous research shows that employees make use of family friendly programs to lessen work and family conflict. Research findings suggest that employees who have greater autonomy over their work schedules and working hours experience less work and family conflict (Byron, 2005; Kossek, Pichler, Bodner, & Hammer, 2011; Moen, Kelley, & Huang, 2008).

Family-related role characteristics that require an individual to expend large amounts of time in family activities ultimately create family to work conflict. Bellavia and Frone (2005) found that individuals who were married reported higher levels of family-work conflict than unmarried individuals. Similarly, parents were found to experience higher levels of family-work conflict than non-parents (Winslow, 2005). The responsibilities of raising children are significantly salient in the lives of most mothers and fathers in paid employment. Although women in dual-parent families carry the majority of the household and parenting responsibilities, evidence has indicated that men are also participating in and taking more ownership of domestic duties (Thomson & Werner, 1997). Having young children at home would demand parents take more time off from work to take care of a child and is a predictor of greater family interference with work for both the parents. Employees who have access to family friendly programs and greater control over their work schedule have a better chance to reduce family-related conflict.



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### **2.3.2 Strain-Based Conflict**

The second form of conflict is strain-based conflict, which occurs when stress from one domain spills over into another domain, and can occur in a bi-directional nature (Murphy & Zagorski, 2006; Thomas & Ganster, 1995). A stressor is defined as any perceived feature of the environment that harms, threatens, or challenges the worker, while strain refers to the psychological, physiological, and behavioural changes that occur as a result of exposure to stressors (Thomas & Ganster, 1995). Job features which may induce strain include jobs that are challenging and lack stability, employment that gives employees no control over work time or work processes and heavy workloads (Murphy & Zagorski, 2006). Concerns over child and family care may serve as stressors which can influence an individual's role.

Strain-based conflict suggests that strain experienced in one role crosses-over and interferes with participation in another role. For example, the strain of attending to a sick family member could affect one's ability to concentrate at work. Work strain is caused by conflict within one's occupational role, work role ambiguity, and work role overload (Kahn & Byosiore, 1992) and leads to role pressure and incompatibility (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). For example, an unexpected meeting late in the day may prevent a parent from picking up their child from school. Conversely, family-related strain such as marital and parental conflict can lead to interference with work roles (Byron, 2005).

Strain-based conflict has been shown to have an adverse effect on employees. Experience of tiredness, depression, anxiety, and irritability are some of the symptoms associated with strain-based conflict (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Such strain symptoms have been found to relate to physical and mental ill health (Martinussen, Richardsen, & Burke, 2007). The experience of burnout, anxiety or

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fatigue caused by negative emotional spillover from work-to-family roles suggests that certain traumatic occurrences, such as a new job, can make it difficult to pursue a well-balanced family life (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985).

Although time-based and strain-based conflicts are conceptually different, they share many common sources in the work domain. In the same way, within the family domain, any role characteristic that creates extensive time commitment may also, directly or indirectly, create strain (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Research conducted by Allen, Herst, Bruck, and Sutton (2000) found that time-based and strain-based conflicts are related to a number of negative work–family and stress-related outcomes variables such as occupational burnout and job stress, and decreased health, organisational commitment and job performance.

### **2.3.3 Behaviour-Based Conflict**

Behaviour-based conflict is the third form of inter role conflict, and occurs when patterns of in-role behaviour are incompatible with the expectations relating to an individual's behaviour within another role (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). It is likely that behaviour-based conflict may also contribute to role interference, particularly when an individual is unable to change their behaviour to conform to the various role expectations; individuals are therefore most likely to experience interference between such roles. For example, assertion and emotional restriction required for managerial positions are incompatible with the need for harmony and emotional openness by family members.

Behaviour-based work–family conflict is different from time-based and strain-based conflict in that it displays an incongruity between the behaviours expected within each role (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000). If an individual is unable to modify the

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behaviour required for a particular role, the likelihood of conflict being experienced between different roles is high (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Behaviour-based conflict is shown to be more prevalent among women than men because of the various transitions women are required to make between various roles (Bartolome, 1972). For example, women are required to transition from the assertive no-nonsense-manager role at work to the caring mother-role at home (Pitt-Catsoupes, Kossek, & Sweet, 2006).

As discussed earlier, role-conflict theory is the most commonly adopted theoretical paradigm to study work and family interferences and its negative consequences which will now be discussed (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Kossek & Ozeki, 1998; Premeaux, Adkins, & Mossholder, 2007).

## **2.4 Consequences of Work and Family Conflict**

A significant number of studies have examined the negative outcomes of work and family conflict (Greenhaus & Powell, 2003; Jacobs & Gerson, 2004; Nomaguchi, 2009). Allen, Ryan, Johnson, Kilburz, and Shockley (2013) performed a comprehensive review of the negative consequences associated with work and family conflict and developed a framework for research by grouping these into three categories. The first category was work-related outcomes, including level of job satisfaction, organisational commitment, turnover absenteeism, job performance, career satisfaction, citizenship behaviour and intention to leave. The second category was family-related outcomes, including level of life satisfaction, marital satisfaction, family satisfaction and family performance. The third category was stress-related outcomes, including the incidence of depression, substance abuse, burnout and psychological strain. All these outcomes were found to relate with work and family

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conflict (Allen et al., 2000; Martinussen et al., 2007; McNall et al., 2010). According to role-conflict theory, work and family conflict is shown to arise due to the incompatibility an individual perceives between roles. An increase in role conflict perceptions of an individual causes stress, which in turn can bear many negative consequences for both the individual and the organisation (Nomaguchi, 2009). The body of earlier research discussed previously indicates that if organisations do not take steps to reduce levels of work–family conflict, the resulting consequences of conflict may adversely influence efficiency, organisational commitment, extra role behaviour and retention of employees in their organisations.

The work and family conflict literature has generally supported the fact that when an individual feels stressed in their family life, this stress spills-over into the work arena and can affect various behaviours in the workplace (Kossek & Ozeki, 1998). Stressed employees may neglect their duties, impeding workflows and processes so that the broader organisation slows down. Research has found that high levels of work–family conflict are related to lower organisational commitment (Cannon, 1998; Thompson, Beauvais, & Lyness, 1999). Individuals who do not have problems in their family lives and get the support of their family members could have more energy for their organisational lives and want to continue to help achieve organisational goals by engaging more in organisational citizenship behaviour (Rioux & Penner, 2001). The study of the relationship between organisational citizenship behaviour and work and family conflict has received steady attention in organisational literature because of their influence on organisational success and on the personal lives of employees (Anderson et al., 2002; Kossek & Ozeki, 1998; Organ & Ryan, 1995). The time constraints, burnout, and exhaustion that often result from work–family conflict may reduce the likelihood that employees will engage in a

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wide variety of extra-role behaviours in their workplace (Bacharach, Bamberger, & Conley, 1991). Organisational commitment and organisational citizenship behaviour which are the focus in the present study are discussed below.

#### **2.4.1 Organisational Commitment**

Organisational commitment has been the focus of interest for researchers in different disciplines such as psychology, sociology, organisational behaviour and human resources management, and an important concept playing a key role in the relationship between individuals and organisations since the 1960s. This concept is made up of the feelings an individual has for the organisation they are working for (Swales, 2002), and can be defined as a function of the perceived compatibility between the individual and the organisation (Bateman & Strasser 1984).

Fisher and Gitelson (1983), Glisson and Durick (1988), Hartenian, Hadaway, and Badovick (1994), Currivan (1999), Maxwell and Steele (2003) and Jaskyte and Lee (2009) have reported a negative relationship between organisational commitment and work and family conflict in their studies. As individual perceive higher levels of conflict between work and family responsibilities, their organisational commitment decreases. Meyer and Allen (1991) have defined organisational commitment in three dimensions: affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Huselid & Day, 1991; Meyer, Allen, & Smith, 1997). Affective commitment refers to an employee's identification with, emotional attachment to and involvement with an organisation (Allen & Meyer, 1990). Employees with high levels of affective commitment stay with an organisation because of the strong emotional attachment they have towards an organisation and a desire to remain with the organisation (McKenna, 2005). Theoretically, it is expected

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that employees report a lower level of affective commitment when they experience difficulties integrating their work and family roles. For example, their positive feeling towards the organisation will decrease when work demands interfere with family requirements. On the other hand, when employees experience interference from family demands, it is likely for them to invest less emotion, energy and time at work which may result in reporting low affective commitment. Such a trend is expected when employees invest heavily in their family roles rather than work roles and when they placed high values on their family roles, which is anticipated to be prevalent in collectivist society. Therefore, employees' reported experience of high level of work and family conflict is expected to show a negative relationship with affective commitment.

Continuance commitment refers to the perceived cost associated with leaving the organisation (Allen & Meyer, 1990). An employee whose relationship with the organisation is based on a high level of continuance commitment will put forth a considerable effort on behalf of the organisation if they believe that continued employment requires such performance. When the family role demands are high, particularly among the employees who put high value on their families, they may feel obligated to stay in the organisation. Individuals who are providers for their families are unable to simply quit their jobs without having another source of income lined up for them. There could also be a possibility that family restrictions may make it harder for these individuals to change jobs or succeed in a new job (Casper, Martin, Buffardi, & Erdwins, 2002). For example, there could be a possibility that the new job may have a higher workload or longer working hours, causing them to make some sacrifice in the time they would love to spend with their family members or even family responsibilities.

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The third dimension of organisational commitment is normative commitment, which refers to an employee's feelings of obligation to remain with the organisation (Allen & Meyer, 1990). This feeling that one ought to work for an organisation has many of the same associations and consequences as that of affective commitment, though often to a lesser degree. The research that forms the basis of normative commitment centres on a person's own moral compass and sense of responsibility to the organisation (Allen & Meyer, 1990). Normative commitment may develop when an organisation offers employees rewards in advance to hire or train the employee (Meyer & Allen, 1991), perhaps illustrating Gouldner's (1960) norm of reciprocity. Indeed, it has been suggested that normative commitment may best indicate the degree to which employees align themselves with organisational goals, a measure of how employees pull in the same direction as the organisation (Jaros, 1997). It is expected that experience of work and family conflict is likely to reduce an individual's likelihood to remain in the organisation when individuals have to make significant trade-offs between work and family domains. Therefore, employees who experience a high level of work and family conflict are expected to report a negative relationship with normative commitment.

#### **2.4.2 Organisational Citizenship Behaviour**

Both scholars and management professionals have acknowledged that employees' engagement in cooperative behaviour is crucial for the organisation's value creation and competitive advantage (Buller & McEvoy, 2012; Taylor, Levy, Boyacigiller, & Beechler, 2008; Vance, 2006). Organisations need their employees to engage in discretionary behaviours extending beyond formal job requirements (Katz, 1964) as this assists with the success of the organisation.

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Organisational citizenship behaviour is defined as “individual behavior that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognised by the formal reward system, and that in the aggregate promotes the effective functioning of the organisation” (Organ, 1988, p.4). By discretionary, it is the behaviour that is not an enforceable requirement of the role or the job description that is clearly specified in terms of the person’s employment contract with the organisation. The citizenship behaviour is rather a matter of personal choice, such that its omission is not generally understood as punishable (Greenberg & Baron, 2000).

These behaviours include work behaviours such as helping others, staying late or working weekends, performing at levels that exceed enforceable standards, tolerating impositions or inconveniences on the job, and being actively involved in company affairs (Organ, 1988; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Paine, & Bachrach, 2000). Such discretionary efforts are especially valuable for small organisations, which function with limited resources (De Clercq & Ruis, 2007; Saridakis, Torres, & Johnstone, 2012; Zhang, Wan, & Jia, 2008). Employees working in small organisations are expected to be flexible and take up a whole variety of different tasks that hardly fit the formal job description (Ryan & Kossek, 2008). In other words, the employees’ engagement in organisational citizenship behaviour emerges as a crucial factor in the success of small enterprises, making the extra effort vital (Mesu et al., 2009).

Organ (1988) identified five dimensions of organisational citizenship behaviour which have been the foundation of much research on organisational citizenship behaviour. These categories are altruism, conscientiousness, sportsmanship, courtesy and civic virtue. Altruism is defined as discretionary behaviours that specifically aid another person in the organisation with an organisationally relevant issue. Conscientiousness is defined as discretionary behaviours that aid the organisation in



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general and go beyond the minimum role requirements of the organisation. Sportsmanship is the willingness of the employee to tolerate less than ideal situations without complaining. Courtesy is defined as behaviours aimed at preventing work-related problems with others. Civic virtue involves behaviours that indicate that the individual responsibly participates in or is involved in the life of the organisation (Organ, 1988, p.6).

Only a few studies have investigated how work and family conflict might relate to employee engagement in organisational citizenship behaviour. Thompson and Werner (1997) found that higher levels of role conflict in the workplace are related to lower levels of organisational citizenship behaviour. Although their study looked exclusively at competing roles within the workplace, comparisons can be made to the phenomenon of work and family conflict. The pressure to engage in certain behaviours to fulfill family obligations may make it difficult to go above and beyond normal role demands at work. Therefore, it is expected that individuals who report higher levels of work and family conflict would engage in fewer organisational citizenship behaviours. Much of the importance in the field of organisational citizenship behaviour stems from the extensive belief that it improves the effectiveness and efficiency of organisations (Organ & Konovsky, 1989; Podsakoff & MacKenzie, 1994). Therefore, to enhance employee engagement, organisations and employers have started implementing several strategies and mechanisms (e.g., workplace nursery, elder care, flexible working arrangements, leave) to help their employees to address work and family conflict. Conflict between work and family has been shown to be one of the primary reasons fewer engage in organisational citizenship behaviour. Among these, adoption of family friendly HR policies and

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practices appears to be the most common practice to help manage work and family conflict.

The next section will discuss these policies and practices providing firstly, a distinction between formal and informal HR policies and practices and then more specifically to those practices which are related to reducing work and family conflict.

## **2.5 Formal and Informal Human Resource Management Policies and Practices**

Human resource management plays a significant role in the sustainability and growth of organisations. There is a formal management system in the shape of proper policies, practices, organisational structures, employment relations and execution of various human resource functions (e.g., recruitment and selection, performance and compensation management).

The perception of ‘modern human resource management practices’ is linked to high levels of delegation of decisions, extensive lateral and vertical communication channels, high reward systems, often linked to multiple performance indicators, and other practices that either individually or in various bundles are deployed to achieve high levels of organisational performance (Colombo, Delmastro, & Rabbiosi, 2007; Ichniowski, Shaw, & Prennushi, 1997). In this context, Guthrie (2001, p.181) states that “the common theme in this literature is an emphasis on utilising a system of management practices giving employees skills, information, motivation, and latitude and resulting in a workforce that is a source of competitive advantage.”

Findings from a number of empirical studies suggest that usage of human resource policies and practices by the employees have a positive impact on job satisfaction, productivity, work life balance, employee turnover and commitment (Barrett & Mayson, 2007; Cardon & Stevens, 2004; Dyer & Reda, 2010). However, the majority of these existing empirical studies have focused on Western countries and

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on large organisations. Relatively little is known about the link between the utilisation of human resource management policies and practices and work-related outcomes in Asian countries, particularly among small and medium enterprises (Georgiadis & Pitelis, 2012; Songini & Gnan, 2013).

Human resource management practices are accepted to be equally important for both small and large enterprises, but manifest differently in them. Large organisations usually have a highly formalised and structured human resource management system that leads organisations to initiate and implement mostly formal human resource policies and practices to maintain consistency and fairness among their employees. Studies have shown that the most significant difference between human resource practices in small and larger enterprises is not in *what* practices are adopted, but in *how* they are adopted (Bacon, Ackers, Storey, & Coates, 1996). One important difference in how HR practices are adopted in small and large enterprises is the level of formality in human resource practices. Nguyen and Bryant (2004, p. 7) define human resource formality as “the extent to which human resource practices are documented, systemised, and institutionalized.” Marlow (2002) suggests that as firms grow they develop formal, identifiable policies, rules and regulations that define and oversee the employment relationship. Thus, formal human resource practices have identifiable policies, rules and regulations that are documented and integrated into the organisation. Informality on the other hand is said to exist when no system is in place and decisions are made on a personal and case-by-case basis. The current study of small and medium size organisations will examine both formal and informal family friendly human resource policies and practices.

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### **2.5.1 Human Resource Management Practices in Small and Medium Enterprises**

Human resource management practices in small and medium enterprises are generally characterised as relatively informal compared with large corporate organisations (Forth et al., 2006; Marlow et al., 2010). Informal human resource practices are defined as ‘a process of workforce engagement, collective and/ or individual, based mainly on unwritten customs and the tacit understanding that arise out of the interaction of the parties at work’ (Ram et al., 2001, p. 846).

Direct involvement of the employer in small organisations reduces the need for bureaucratic controls (Kotey & Sheridan, 2004). Further, the social interaction among small groups of employees allows the use of informal and cultural mechanisms that substitute or complement the formal administrative systems, including human resource management practices (De Kok, Uhlaner, & Thurik, 2006). Studies comparing large and small organisations have indicated that small organisations generally invest fewer resources in implementing formal human resource management policies and practices than large organisations. The overlap between business and ownership in the management of small organisations further reduces the adoption of more formal policies and practices (De Kok et al., 2006). This is because employer involvement in the management of the business implies there is less pressure for adoption of formal human resource management practices (Kotey & Sheridan, 2004). However, small group and social control systems can be more effective than the bureaucratic and administrative ones. When a small group of employees share common values and coordinate through personal connections, the management of human resource practices becomes simple and informal (Songini & Gnan, 2013).

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Small and medium enterprises owners have a preference for personal supervision of employees, enabling close performance monitoring but also strengthening social ties (Mazzarol, 2003). Reluctance to delegate authority to specialists leads to an absence of professionally informed or managed human resource policy and practice (Forth et al., 2006). The interaction of a personal presence and an absence of professionalised practice therefore facilitate an informally negotiated employment relationship embedded in a range of economic, political and social networks that leads into managing small and medium enterprises on a more informal basis (Edwards & Ram, 2006). Employees working under such an informal business environment might find it easy to balance between work and family demands since they would have an opportunity to negotiate family friendly human resource practices whenever required.

Organisations operating under an informal human resource system are more likely to create a strong sense of teamwork and strong social relationship between employees and the manager which is expected to allow employees to negotiate work responsibilities, working hours and other job-related affairs with their immediate supervisor/manager (Barrett & Mayson, 2007). When employees are able to utilise human resource practices on an informal basis according to their needs and convenience it may provide an opportunity for them to invest their limited time and resources in the domain where it is needed the most and it is more likely that they will experience less conflict between work and family. One particular type of human resource practice and policy relates to things that help employees manage their work and family lives. These are usually referred to as family friendly human resource policies and practices and will now be discussed.

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### 2.5.2 Family Friendly Human Resource Policies and Practices

According to Marlow and Patton (2002), flexible working arrangements such as part-time work, telecommuting, leave, and childcare arrangements are found to be the common human resource policies and practices embedded within organisational human resource management systems to help manage work–family issues and to promote employee wellbeing.

Maxwell (2005) identifies a framework consisting of four main domains with sub-domains of family friendly policies and practices: flexible working arrangements, leave, childcare arrangements and supportive arrangements (See Figure 2.1 below). These arrangements are shown to be practised more widely in large organisations in developed countries within a certain policy framework to manage conflicts arising from work and family domains (Mordi & Ojo, 2011). In the absence of any theory driven framework that applies to small and medium enterprises, Maxwell’s framework formed the basis in this research study of assessing the current human resource policy and practices that help manage conflict in the context of small and medium enterprises. Each of these domains and sub-domains will now be discussed briefly.

<b>Flexible work arrangements</b>  Flexible working hours Part-time work Job sharing Teleworking	<b>Leave</b>  Maternity leave Parental leave Paternity leave
<b>Childcare arrangements</b>  On-site Off-site	<b>Supportive arrangements</b>  Employee counselling Work life management training

**Figure 2.1: Domains and sub-domains of work–family arrangements (Source: Maxwell, 2005)**

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### **2.5.3 Flexible Work Arrangements**

One of the major innovations in human resource practices in the last decade has been the proliferation of flexible working practices, such as working from home or flexibility in work schedules. The latter especially is often seen as an important mechanism to reconcile work and family life. Previous studies have been able to show that flexible working arrangements can be helpful in improving work–family reconciliation, even though findings are sometimes mixed and effects are often small in magnitude (Allen et al., 2013). Studies have also suggested that flexible work arrangements are associated with less work and family conflict, greater wellbeing of workers and less burnout. This is because usage of certain flexible work arrangements can provide an opportunity for employees to help avoid time and resource pressure in performing multiple conflicting roles. Some of the major subdomains of flexible work arrangements will now be discussed briefly in relation to reducing work and family conflict.

#### ***2.5.3.1 Flexible Working Hours***

Flexible Working Hours (is also sometimes understood as flexi time as reported in some of the literature (Dunham, Pierce, & Castaneda, 1987; Golden, 2008; Kossek, Barber, & Winters, 1999; Maxwell, Rankine, Bell, & MacVicar, 2007). Therefore, the term FWHs and flexi time are used interchangeably throughout this thesis. Flexible working hours refer to “a policy in which the traditional fixed times that employees start and finish the working day are replaced by a framework or set of rules within which employees are allowed some freedom to choose their starting and quitting times” (Hicks & Klimoski, 1981, p. 335).

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Flexibility in the workplace is about developing modern working practices to fit the needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century workforce. Both employers and employees can gain from flexible work scheduling as both parties have the flexibility to organise their working arrangements in a way that suits them. The general notion is that flexible working hour arrangements will reduce work and family conflict by increasing employee choice and flexibility over work and family demands. Flexible work schedule can allow employees to prioritise where and when to invest their limited available time and energy to avoid trying to perform multiple conflicting roles. Flexible working hours – a work schedule that permits flexible starting and stopping times – has gained wide attention as a possible solution to work and family conflict in most developed countries in the West. Evidence indicates that flexible working hours have been widely practised in developed countries and that the trend has been for increasingly larger numbers of organisations to adopt the flexible working hour arrangement (Breaugh & Frye, 2008).

However, in Asia, flexible working hour arrangements are not widely used and relatively few studies on the practice have been carried out (Chow & Chew, 2006). Yet there is evidence that indicates the need for increased use of flexible working hour arrangements in the region, irrespective of large or small organisations as more dual-earning couples enter the workforce and the economy grows. A study by Komarraju (2006) reports that Asian countries have started adopting some form of FWAs but the overall number of employees involved still remains small. One possible reason for this could be because of the employee's mind-set. The mind-set that one needs to be in the office appears more customary in the Asian context (Casimir, Waldman, Bartram, & Yang, 2006).



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The availability of flexible working hours can be expressed formally (in the rules and regulations of the organisation) or informally (by negotiating with supervisor/manager) (Duncan & Pettigrew, 2012). It is widely acknowledged that large organisations usually operate their HR practices through formal policies and procedures while small organisations tend to operate on an informal basis. Since the context of the present study is on small organisations in the developing economy, the focus of the discussion centres around the usage of informal flexible working hour arrangements as an alternative solution to reducing work and family conflict. Absence of formal policy does not prevent organisations from agreeing to various types of flexible arrangements on an informal basis. Although uptake has been limited, Atkinson and Laura (2009) has reported that there is almost universal interest among the employers in small organisations to find out more about flexible arrangements and in learning what other organisations are doing in that context.

A number of studies have shown that formal flexible working arrangements contain only some of the possibilities open to employees seeking to minimise the conflict between work and family (Casimir et al., 2006; Duncan & Pettigrew, 2012). In the daily interplay between employees at work, a number of informal practices are formed as to what is and what is not permitted (e.g., Chow & Chew, 2006). In other words, employees and managers interact to create a workplace culture with a set of practices regulating which freedom individuals may allow themselves to take.

A useful example of the importance of informal flexible working hour arrangements in the workplace is evident in a study of flexi time working in the Danish public service (Thaulow, 1993). The study has shown that informal flexibility was more prevalent than formal flexibility among the civil servants and more than half the employees who had only informal flexibility arrangements were able to vary their

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daily work time by one hour or more. These findings are supported by other studies (e.g., Golden, Veiga & Simsek, 2006; Gronlund, 2007; Halpern, 2005) that demonstrate that informal flexibility in working hour arrangements normally manifest themselves as verbal agreements between co-workers, and sometimes also between co-workers and their immediate supervisors. These verbal agreements typically involve permission to report for work late the next day, or permission to leave some time before the end of working hours to attend to family matters.

A second example of informal flexibility is the swapping of shifts. Through mutual agreement and understanding between the colleagues, such informal flexibility may allow covering other's shifts as and when the situation demands. A third example is the decentralisation of working-hour decisions to smaller groups in which employees working within the same group may have the option of highly individualised working hours. Finally, informal practices may also provide an option to come and go to and from work more or less as employees want without prior arrangement with others despite a fixed work time. Such flexible work options could free up time to reduce the conflict that may arise as the result of role pressures from one domain making it more difficult to comply with the demands of the other roles. There is enough evidence that both men and women are looking to find a balance between work, family and caring responsibilities which are shared more equally than ever before. When such flexible opportunities are made available for the employees it becomes much easier for them to balance time and energy between work and family.

#### ***2.5.3.2 Part-Time Employment and Job Sharing***

Part-time employment is usually defined as regular wage employment in which the hours of work are less than normal (Thurman & Trah, 1990). In the United States,

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part-time work is generally defined as less than 35 hours of work in a week. This definition differs across countries. Canada and the United Kingdom normally use 30 hours as the cutoff for part-time (Hipple, 1998). In France, part-time is defined as at least 20% below the statutory level of working hours, while in Germany it is less than 36 hours of work per week (Houseman, 1995). In contrast, part-time employment in Japan is explicitly related to status within the organisation and not to hours worked. Houseman and Osawa (2003) have found that part-time employees in Japan actually work as many hours as full-time workers. These different definitions suggest that there is no single universal definition of part-time employment. Generally, part-time is a form of employment that carries fewer hours of work per week than a full-time employment.

Part-time work started to expand as one manifestation of the emergence of more flexible working arrangements from the 1970s onwards (Blossfeld & Hakim, 1997). For the past couple of decades, the role of part-time working as a means by which a certain type of worker, namely women with domestic caring responsibilities, can manage a balance between their working and family lives has been discussed because part-time is simply a working arrangement that frees up time for other activities. For many employees with care responsibilities their decision to work part-time is shaped by external constraints, such as a lack of childcare services or the work schedule demands (Fagan & Walthery, 2007). Part-time employment expressly is shown to help employees manage the balance between work and family demands whilst retaining a connection with the job market. Using the most positive understanding, a part-time working arrangement holds the potential to enable employees to balance work and family demands.

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Part-time work arrangements continue to expand in many countries, especially in developed countries. However, due to the different economic, labour market conditions and institutional frameworks that shape part-time working arrangements and employers' labour-use strategies, its incidence varies internationally. A study by Lee and Eyraud (2008) has found out that developed countries are shown to have a higher level of part-time working employees compared to developing countries.

Job sharing is another component of flexible working arrangements. Job sharing is defined as "an alternative work arrangement whereby the duties and responsibilities of a full-time position are shared by two part-time employees" (Baker, Avery, & Crawford, 2007, p.38). Evidence presented in the literature suggests that greater autonomy provided to share the job between the employees at their own convenience could provide employees with positive outcomes (Baltes et al., 1999; Pierce, Newstrom, Dunham, & Barber, 1989; Ronen & Pimps, 1981). In addition, it has also been suggested that greater work schedule flexibility such as opportunity to share the job among the colleagues will lead to enhanced work–family balance perceptions for employees (Tausig & Fenwick, 2001). Employees who have access to job sharing opportunities may offer employees better opportunities to devote more time to home, children and relaxation. This leads to having to make fewer trade-offs, experiencing less work to family conflict and feeling better about their parenting than people who work in less supportive organisations (Ronen & Pimps, 1981).

Therefore, it is logical to assume that organisational programs that offer employees greater flexibility should provide employees with a better ability to balance between work and family responsibilities compared to their counterparts working on traditional fixed hour schedules. These arguments imply that those employees

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utilising flexible work schedules will be able to better balance time and energy between work and family demands.

### ***2.5.3.3 Teleworking***

Teleworking is defined broadly as “working from anywhere at any time” (Kurland & Bailey, 1999, p.54), or performing one’s work duties at a remote location. The term ‘telework’ is often used interchangeably with ‘telecommuting’ and ‘virtual work’ (Gajendran & Harrison, 2007). According to the findings of Sudan, Ryan, Drake, Sandler, Boggs, and Giusto (2008) study, it has been reported that as a practice, teleworking is becoming increasingly common internationally.

Telework scholars have pointed out that working away from the central office changes the motivational qualities of work, as well as employee attitudes and organisational perceptions (Sullivan & Lewis, 2001). Feldman and Gainey (1997) argue that telework should have positive implications for employee motivation and attitude; working away from the traditional office permits higher autonomy because it allows employees control over how and when work is performed. Indeed, telework is positively linked with autonomy (Gajendran & Harrison, 2007) and flexibility (Hill, Erickson, Holmes, & Ferris, 2010). Due in part to the autonomy and flexibility it provides, and the entrusted status it may symbolise, telework is likely to impact employee perception of work–family balance support.

Although telework initially aimed to cut organisational costs related with maintaining and leasing property, telework is increasingly implemented to reduce work pressures and support work–family balance (Sparrow, 2000). Feldman and Gainey (1997) conceived that employees pursue telework to balance competing roles of work and family; they are attracted to organisations that offer telework technology and are likely to leave organisations that do not allow them the capacity to balance

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their work and family demands. The flexibility model views telework as a way of balancing the demands of work and family (Sullivan & Lewis, 2001). In support of the flexibility model, different studies have identified telework as a mechanism for employees to care for dependents (Hartig, Kylin, & Johansson, 2007; Sullivan & Lewis, 2001). The results of these studies have shown that telework helps employees to support work–family balance. For example, telework allows them to fulfill household responsibilities, strengthening family relationships and permitting optimisation of time management (Hill et al., 2010; Hillbrecht et al., 2008).

While there are many key benefits that a telework arrangement can provide to employees, certain challenges could hold employees back from adopting them more widely, particularly in small organisations. Technical feasibility can be a major issue for the small organisations, especially for those in developing or emerging economies since information and communication technology infrastructure is not fully developed.

#### ***2.5.3.4 Leave***

Leave is the second domain of family friendly human resource policies and practices. Maxwell (2005) has identified as one of the possible mechanisms towards helping employees to balance between work and family demands. Leave is a temporary period of absence from employment granted to employees for various reasons. For example, maternity leave is granted to expectant or new mothers immediately before and after childbirth. These policies and practices are generally aimed at supporting the mother's full recovery from childbirth and facilitating a stronger mother–child bond. It is widely recognised that there are considerable differences across countries with regard to leave policies designed to help individuals balance career and

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caregiving. Countries differ in the extent that they sponsor paid leave for childbirth and adoption, paid sick leave, and paid annual vacation. To illustrate, the United States (U.S.) provides 12 weeks unpaid maternity leave to mothers following the birth or adoption of a child while Germany provides 52 or more weeks (Heymann, Earle, & Hayes, 2007).

Arguments for greater family support, such as paid maternity/paternity leave, are predicated on the notion that the availability of such supports will result in less work and family conflict for employees. However, this is taken for granted based on an assumption which requires empirical investigation. The Society for Human Resources Management (SHRM) argues that employers should be encouraged to voluntarily provide paid leave for illness, vacation and personal days to accommodate the needs of employees and their family members (Hartig et al., 2007). From a theoretical perspective, policies such as paid time for sick leave and parental leave are thought to be beneficial to working parents because they serve as a resource that can help avert conflicts between work and family (e.g., Edwards & Rothbard, 2000; Goode, 1960). Paid leave policies act as a resource in that they enable employees to meet caregiving obligations while also remaining a viable member of the workforce. In countries such as the U.S., the responsibility for acquiring the resources that enable individuals to manage work and family responsibilities is primarily left to individuals and organisations (Neal & Hammer, 2007). Working parents are encouraged to rely on their own means for managing work and family, and the adoption of work and family arrangements within organisations is framed as a business case (Den Dulk, 2005). In developing countries, it is not fully understood how the provision of leave may help employees to balance between work and family demands as there is limited research.

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#### ***2.5.3.5 Childcare Arrangements***

Today, finding appropriate childcare arrangements is a problem faced by working parents around the world. Access to childcare is sometimes thought to be an issue mainly in developed countries, but parents in developing countries are facing similar problems as family structures change and more women join the labour market either through choice or necessity (Morel, 2007). One way that employees have been receiving various kinds of assistance with childcare is through support they can access through their workplace. Workplace programs are not the only, nor even the primary, means of accessing assistance with childcare. However, they are nevertheless helping many working parents and are attracting increasing attention as a way of meeting the overall societal challenge of finding mechanisms for making childcare more accessible and available to working parents.

To help working parents accommodate their dual roles, employers have begun to provide childcare assistance such as on-site and off-site care. However, such assistance is generally found to be provided by the large organisations in developed countries where they have adequate resources to offer support (Dex & Scheibl, 2001) and studies have provided general support that on-site and off-site childcare assistance can help reduce work and family conflict (Greenhaus & Kopelman, 1981).

#### ***2.5.3.6 Supportive Arrangements***

Employers or supervisors play an important role in the effectiveness of programs that are designed to help their employees mitigate work and family conflict (Miliken, Martins, & Morgan, 1998). Studies have suggested that employees whose employers/supervisors support their efforts to balance work and family are less likely to experience work and family conflicts and will be more inclined to take up



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available work–life programs (Dex & Scheibl, 2001). According to Maxwell (2005) supportive arrangements such as employee counselling and training are shown to be important components of supportive arrangements.

Organisations have established Employment Assistant Programs (EAPs), which aim at providing professional, confidential and a broad range of counselling services for supporting employees and their families (Grobler & Joubert, 2012). Many employers today are actively integrating services and resources to support overall employee physical and mental health, expanding EAP services to include disease management and preventative health, and coordinating with a broad range of other work–family and human resource initiatives to help employees balance between work and family (Kotey & Folker, 2007).

For example, training on work–life balance management has shown to have a positive effect on employees overall wellbeing (Dex & Scheibl, 2001). Employee training is understood to comprise any activities which assist employees to adjust to the changes affecting the workplace (Valle, Castillo, & Rodriguez-Duarte, 2009). Kotey and Folker (2007) and Johnson (2002) argue that both formal and informal training can help employees adapt to a new working environment. The introduction of a new system in the workplace could cause stress to the employees which may affect their family life because of the spill-over effect if no proper training is provided. Therefore, regular training for the employees is expected to help them manage balance between work and family conflicts, especially strain and behavioural-based conflict. However, the introduction of costly supportive arrangements (e.g., work life balance management training) may be outside the scope of small organisations due to resource constraints.

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In summary, the family-friendly human resource policies and practices proposed by Maxwell (2005) seem to play a significant role in helping employees to manage balance between work and family demands. As discussed earlier, in the absence of formalised human resource policies and practices in small organisations, employees in the small and medium enterprises in the current study organisations are expected to adopt mostly informal human resource practices to help them manage the balance between work and family demands as opposed to large organisations. Further, small organisations, due to a lack of resources, are less likely to offer costly programs (e.g., childcare support, formal trainings, part-time and job sharing) to help employees manage this balance. The current study aims at investigating the role of formal and informal human resource policies and practices in managing work and family conflict in small organisations.

The following section discusses the context of the current study, the small and medium enterprises of Bhutan.

## **2.6 The Context of the Study: SMEs of Bhutan**

Bhutan is a small landlocked Himalayan country sandwiched between two Asian giants: the People's Republic of China in the north and India on the other three sides. Bhutan started opening up to the rest of the world with the start of the first Five Year Plan in the early 1960s (Ura & Galay, 2004). Since then, the country has witnessed a rapid transformation in the living standards of the people and economy. Bhutan provides an especially interesting country context for this study, given that Gross National Happiness is a national policy priority. Gross National Happiness is a holistic development philosophy which aspires to bring and nurture the wellbeing of

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Bhutanese citizens. Experience of greater work and family conflict possibly will undermine the aspiration of Gross National Happiness.

In Bhutan, development of the private sector has been the focus of the government since the 6<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan (1987-1992) when it was designated as the engine of economic growth in the country. The role of small and medium enterprises within the framework of private sector development has been envisioned as the priority sector in numerous government policy statements and documents, such as Bhutan 2020: A Vision for Peace, Prosperity and Happiness and 9<sup>th</sup> Plan Document: 2002-2007 (RGoB, 2012).

Experiences of both developed and developing countries suggest that small and medium enterprises have a catalytic role in the economic development of a nation. In the context of Bhutan, those enterprises employing between 5–19 employees are defined as small and medium enterprises which make up an overwhelming majority (approximately 98%) of all industries (RGoB, 2012) and are considered to be the drivers of competitiveness and innovation in many economic sectors and impact directly on employment and income generation (Tambunan, 2008). Small and medium enterprises play a central role not only in generating revenue, but also in augmenting the entrepreneurial base, providing employment and reducing poverty. In fact, their share in employment is much higher in developing countries than in the developed ones. Indonesia, for example, has about 90% of its employees in the small and medium enterprises sector, comprising about 48 million enterprises and constituting 99.8% of the total industrial units in the country (Tambunan, 2008).

Evidence suggests that small and medium enterprises are not only different from one another but also differ from larger firms in several important ways (Curran, 2006; Torres & Julien, 2005). SMEs are less likely to have collective bargaining (Dundon

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et al., 1999), they lack internal labour markets (Westhead & Storey, 1996) and tend to have more centralised decision-making (Rodwell & Shadur, 1997). Their cultures are shaped, at least initially, by owners whose goals and desires are communicated directly to employees in a context of close spatial and social proximity (Jennings & Beaver, 1997; Marlow & Patton, 1993), which also fosters informal relationships and informal working practices that are generally flexible and quick to change and adapt (Gilman & Edwards, 2008; Nadin & Cassell, 2007). Such informal relationships and working practices appear to be particularly crucial for employees to help maintain balance between work and life in the highly competitive business environment of today where employees are faced with more multiple roles and responsibilities than ever.

Like many small and medium enterprises in other developed and developing countries, small and medium enterprises in Bhutan are confronted with increased globalisation of business and rapid technological changes that pose a great threat for their survival in highly competitive business environments. Choosing not to participate in global markets is no longer an option. In order to compete and survive in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, having a highly committed workforce motivated to work for their employing organisation beyond their normal duties is seen to be crucial. An organisation having committed employees implies a major professional loyalty as well as a deep identification with a willingness to perform extra role duties which has been shown to result in high work performance and productivity. But, how these behaviours are generated among employees in small and medium enterprises is not fully understood (Zheng, Morrison, & O'Neill, 2006). Little is known regarding human resource management practices in small and medium enterprises. Most studies of human resource management in small and medium enterprises have

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focused on comparing human resource management practices in small and large firms (Golhar & Deshpande, 1997; Hornsby & Kuratko, 2003). Further, most studies focusing upon small and medium enterprises tend to examine the existence of human resource management practices without examining the impact of the human resource management practices in small and medium enterprises.

Therefore, taking Bhutan as the context, this current study expects to broaden our understanding about the strategies to help employees to reduce work and family conflict being adopted by small and medium enterprises beyond the focus of current existing research in the Western context. The aims of the current research and the conceptual framework are presented next.

## **2.7 Research Aims**

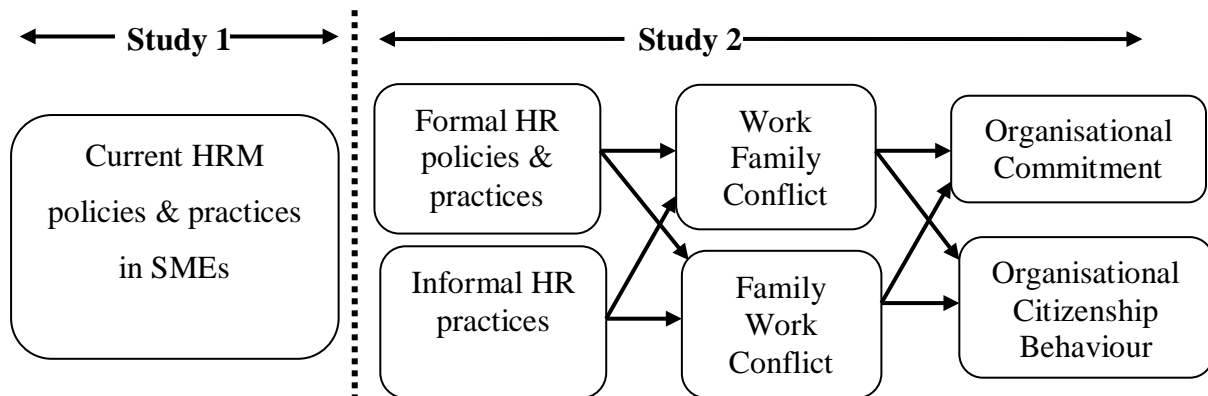
The aims of this current study are:

1. To examine what are the current family friendly human resource policies and practices in Bhutanese small and medium enterprises and which of these are formal or informal.
2. To investigate the impact of utilisation of formal and informal human resource management policies and practices in the management of work and family conflict within small and medium enterprises in a developing country.
3. To examine the link between the utilisation of human resource management practices and employees' experience of work and family conflict and the impact this has on their level of work and family conflict and their level of organisational commitment and organisational citizenship behaviour.

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## 2.8 Conceptual Framework: Proposed Relationships

The current research is divided into Study 1 and Study 2. Figure 2.2 presents the proposed conceptual framework for the studies which will now be discussed.



**Figure 2.2: Conceptual Framework**

### Study 1

The overall objective of the Study 1 is to examine what are the current formal and informal human resource management policies and practices that help employees to manage the balance between work and family demands in Bhutanese small and medium enterprises and also to determine how formal those human resource policies and practices are.

As discussed earlier in the review of literature, small organisations are generally shown to adopt mostly informal human resource management practices as opposed to formal human resource policies and practices. Further, most of these studies were conducted in developed countries. Therefore, the current research is significant because it is expected to further improve our understanding around the adoption of

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both formal and informal human resource management practices in small organisations from a developing country context.

## **Study 2**

The overall purpose of Study 2 is:

- To examine the link between employees' utilisation of formal and informal human resource policies and practices and their experiences of work and family conflict.
- To investigate the relationship between employee utilisation of family friendly human resource management policies and practices, their experience of work and family conflict and the influence this has on their level of organisational commitment and organisational citizenship behaviour.

Research has also shown that family friendly human resource management policies and practices are designed to help employees manage balance between work and family demands. The studies have extensively examined the link between the utilisation of the family friendly human resource policies and work–family conflict mostly within large organisations in developed countries.

Studies concerning small organisations are limited and not much is known about the relationship between the utilisation of family friendly policies and practices and work and family conflict. As discussed earlier in the review of literature, small organisations are generally shown to adopt informal family friendly human resource management practices. Research in this area is specifically significant because few studies have empirically examined the impact of both formal and informal human resource management practices on work and family conflict within small organisations.

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The increased usage of family friendly human resource policies and practices is expected to result in a reduction of work and family conflict. For instance, employees who make use of family friendly policies and practices such as flexible work arrangements should experience a reduction of work interfering with family because the time, energy and other resources can be more easily diverted to performing family roles. As discussed earlier, when employers provide access for employees to use family friendly human resource policies and practices, employees are expected to experience less conflict between work and family domains. It is also likely that employees who experience less work and family conflict will exhibit higher commitment to the organisation and will reciprocate by going above and beyond their formal job duties. For example, when employers provided access to parental leave to provide care for children or other dependants at home employees may experience less pressure for the time and energy needed to perform this role. In return, employees may be motivated and encouraged to engage in extra role duties. Further, employees are likely to experience less conflict when one domain can provide resources to address demands in the other domain. Thus, it is expected that employees will experience a positive mood, behaviours and a sense of accomplishment which may result in exhibiting high organisational commitment and engage in more organisational citizenship behaviour.

The next chapter reports on Study 1 which examines what are the current human resource management policies and practices in Bhutanese small and medium enterprises and how formal those policies and practices are.



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## **Chapter 3: Study 1**

### **3.1 Introduction**

The main purpose of this chapter is to report Study 1 which aims to investigate the current family friendly Human Resource) policies and practices that are utilised by the employees of Bhutanese small and medium enterprises to help manage balance between work and family demands. Despite a steady increase in the number of small and medium enterprises over the years in Bhutan, no studies have been conducted to examine the type of Human Resource Management practices in these small and medium enterprises to date and how they are implemented. What is known about the human resource practices in small and medium enterprises of other countries is that they are generally found to operate informally. Therefore, a similar trend is also

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expected in Bhutanese small and medium enterprises. The findings from Study 1 will add further to our understanding of human resource practices that support managing work and family commitments in small and medium enterprises from a different country perspective.

The chapter commences by presenting the methodology used for Study 1. This is followed by a further discussion on the sampling strategy, sample size, data collection and process of data analysis. The chapter concludes by summarising the key findings and a discussion together that will form the basis for reviewing the conceptual framework and designing the questionnaire for Study 2.

### **3.2 Methodology**

A qualitative method was adopted for this study to investigate employees' and employers' perception and experiences concerning work and family conflict and their approach towards managing it through human resource initiatives and the usage of human resource policies and practices. The qualitative approach, using face-to-face interviews, was appropriate for this type of study for three reasons. First, it provided an opportunity to explore the types of family friendly human resource policies and practices available for employees' use within Bhutanese small and medium enterprises through personal one on one conversation with the interviewees. "Interviews are one of the most common forms of data collection method in qualitative research because they are a flexible form of social encounter that can take place in natural environments" (Silverman, 2001, p. 34). As a method, it requires both the interviewer and the respondents to engage in dialogue, and consequently requires some level of social interaction. As a consequence of the interaction, issues can be clarified and points discussed within the interview itself to provide for detailed and in-depth data analysis (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996, p.57).

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Second, a semi-structured approach with open-ended questions allows participants to share any other unique experiences that might not be covered by the set interview questions during the interview. Third, with the interviews conducted in a private setting allows for frank personal opinion about the implementation of human resource policies and practices. This research proposal was approved by the University Human Research Ethics Committee (UHREC) approval number 1400000034 at Queensland University of Technology. The identities of participants were kept confidential when analysing and reporting the data.

### **3.3 Sampling Strategy**

The data base maintained by the Bhutan Chamber of Commerce and Industry was used to identify the potential organisations to approach. This data base provides details of all the organisations in the country. As small and medium enterprises were the focus for this study, it was important to identify those organisations whose employment size is between 5-19 employees in keeping with the definition of small and medium enterprises in the context of Bhutan (RGoB, 2012).

The Bhutan Chamber of Commerce and Industry BCCI data base showed a little over 1300 registered SMEs as of 2011 (RGoB, 2012). Over 80% of these establishments are concentrated in the two major towns of Thimphu and Phuentsholing. Thimphu alone has a little over 600 small and medium enterprises, while around 400 small and medium enterprises are in the Phuentsholing region. In light of the time constraint and the small number of small and medium enterprises required for this phase of the study, a total of 52 small and medium enterprises were selected, 30 from Thimphu and 22 from the Phuentsholing region. Every twentieth organisation in the list was selected in both the regions to select the sample. Accordingly, written requests were

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sent to all 30 and 22 small and medium enterprises in Thimphu and Phuentsholing respectively.

Out of 52 requests, 47 organisations (25 from Thimphu and 22 from Phuentsholing) showed their willingness to participate in this research project. All 47 organisations provided the details (age, gender, working experiences, marital status, and contact numbers) of the employees as requested. As the establishment of small and medium enterprises in Thimphu and Phuentsholing roughly stands to be in the ration of 6:4, the final sample includes six organisations from Thimphu and four organisations from Phuentsholing, making a total of 10 organisations. The Thimphu sample was obtained by selecting every fourth organisation, while for Phuentsholing every fifth organisation was selected.

The participant (employees) selection was conducted next. The employees of the selected organisations were divided according to their gender along with other details such as age and employment duration in their respective organisations. The main purpose of preparing separate lists for males and females was to achieve diversity in the sample. Selecting every third employee from the lists was the strategy used to identify the participants for this study. The final participants were selected after considering the following two additional criteria.

- a) Employees with over two years working experience in the same organisation.
  - a. Employees falling within the 25 - 40 age bracket for whom work and family conflict issues are potentially salient.

Whenever the third employee in the list did not meet the criteria, the next immediate employee in the list was considered. The process was repeated until 20 employee participants were identified. The employer/human resource managers of the selected

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organisations were automatically selected as participants to represent their view on HR policies and practice initiative, support and usage from the employers' perspective.

All the selected participants were contacted by phone to set up appointments for interviews. When the selected employee participant was not available, the next employee in the list was contacted after reviewing their eligibility to be a respondent for this study. Appointments were arranged in the participant's place of work. During the call more information was given on the interview process and the availability of and access to a quiet and private room to avoid noise and disruption. The date and time of interview was scheduled to suit the participants.

A time slot of 25-30 minutes was arranged to provide sufficient time for conducting the interview. This time frame proved to be adequate in completing the interviews. The introduction at the beginning of the interview included further information about the purpose of the study, an outline of the timing and focus of the interview. A discussion of the researcher's credibility, the boundaries and confidentiality given to the interview situation, including parameters supporting the participation of the interviewee in the study was also highlighted. An opportunity for the interviewees to ask any questions was also provided. Finally, the consent forms were discussed and signed by the respondents to assure informed consent.

### **3.4 Sample Size**

A total of 20 employees, two from each organisation (12 male and eight female) constitutes the total number of respondents representing the employees' perspective. The average age of the male respondents was 33 years and 32 years for women. Their average working experience in the same organisation ranged from five years

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for male and seven years for women. Over 75% of the total employee participants were married.

Seven employers and three human resource managers represented the employers' views. Of the seven employers, six were male and one was female. The average age of the male respondents was 40 years, while the female employer was 31 years old at the time of the interview. In addition, three human resource managers (two female and one male) represented their respective employers. The average age of the female human resource managers was 35 years old, and the male human resource manager was 38 years old at the time of the interview.

### **3.5 Data Collection**

Two pilot face-to-face interviews were conducted in two small and medium enterprises with individuals who were not participants for the final interviews. This pilot helped to identify any problems with the interview process and the ease of interpreting the questions. No major problems were encountered that required making any major adjustments in preparation for the actual interviews.

Whilst there are a variety of interview techniques that can be used in data collection, a semi-structured interview approach was followed to collect the data for this study. Two separate sets of predetermined open-ended questions were asked to the employers and the employees during the interview. The interviews were conducted in English since it is the second official language in Bhutan and most employed people can communicate fairly well in English. The questions asked in the interviews were on domains and sub-domains of family friendly arrangements identified by Maxwell (2005). The interview questions were prepared to explore the current family friendly HR policies and practices and how they are implemented.

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Separate sets of questions were asked of the employer/manager and the employees. Five open-ended questions were put to the employer/manager that concerned mostly the initiatives of family friendly arrangements and their support in helping employees to balance between work and family life. Examples of questions that were asked to employer/manager are, *‘what are some of the initiatives that your organisation provides to the employees in balancing time between work and family matters?’* and *‘what ways do your organisation support these initiatives – formally Vs informally?’* (Refer to Appendix 1). For the employees, eight open-ended questions were asked in seeking their responses regarding availability and usage of family friendly arrangements that support them balancing their time between work and family. *‘What kinds of family friendly arrangements are available for you to use that help you to balance between work and family?’* and *‘how much control would you say you have in scheduling your working hours’?* (Refer to Appendix 2).

Participant’s responses were recorded in their individual checklist by the researcher. The checklist was developed based on Maxwell’s (2005) family friendly domains and sub-domains. Main domains and sub-domains were listed in the first and second column respectively. A third column was used to record the existence or non-existence of the domains and sub-domains according to the responses from each participant. Columns four and five were used to categorise those domains and sub-domains into formal and informal. The sixth and seventh column identified whether the domains and sub-domains are put into use as a formal policy initiative or practised informally. Any other comments and responses that did not fit their individual checklist were noted down in the blank space kept against each question in every checklist. Whenever the space was not sufficient to record the responses, fresh sheets of paper were used and assigned the unique identifier number.

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It was only possible to make brief notes during the interview session. Key words and phrases were therefore recorded in the checklist to capture the responses of the participants. Wherever possible, abbreviations and acronyms were used to quickly note what was being said. The interview notes were expanded on at the end of each day to document as much detail as possible. The most relevant comments for this study are presented later in italic font in the findings and discussion section of this chapter. Those comments do not necessarily represent participant's actual words but align with the key message being conveyed as noted by the researcher.

### **3.6 Process of Data Analysis**

A thematic analysis approach was adopted to analyse the interview data. Thematic analysis involves generating codes, identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data and is one of the common methods for analysing qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This method facilitated the identification of common themes in this study that centred on formal and informal human resource policies and practices that help manage balance between work and family roles.

The analysis of the employees' interview began by creating distinct column headings (domains and sub-domains of family friendly arrangements, practice option, formal/informal and frequency count). These headings were created to directly correspond with the eight open-ended interview questions to reveal the experiences of the employees about how work and family conflict was managed through formal and informal human resource policies and practices. All the responses from the eight interview questions were assembled and then placed under the corresponding heading. Each list under every heading was examined for terms, phrases and concepts that were repeated, revealing distinct themes within each category. This revealed the prevailing experiences of employees regarding the overall support in



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reducing work and family conflict through formal and informal human resource policies and practices.

The same approach was adopted to analyse the employers' interview data, but with the inclusion of two different headings: HR policy and practice *initiative* and *support* in helping employees balance between work and family life. The analyses of the employer' interview commenced by creating distinct column headings (domains and sub-domains of family friendly arrangements, initiative, support options, formal/informal and frequency count). All the headings were created to directly correspond with the five open-ended interview questions to reveal the experience of the employers' initiatives and support in helping employees reduce conflict between work and family. Every response under every heading was studied to explore human resource policy and practice initiatives through terms, phrases and concepts from the interview responses. This revealed the prevalent experience of employers' regarding the overall initiative and support of work and family life for employees within Bhutanese small and medium enterprises through formal and informal HR policies and practices. The findings along with a discussion will now be presented.

### **3.7 Findings and Discussion**

This section of the chapter provides the main findings along with discussion for Study 1. As expected, the findings from this study suggest that informal human resource practices are more prevalent than formal policies and practices. However, there does appear to be a few formal policies and practices around the leave domain. In addition, support from co-workers appears to play a significant role in helping manage balance between work and family demands. The findings and discussions are presented in the order of the themes identified by Maxwell (2005) that consists of four main domains and sub-domains of family friendly human resource policies and

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practices followed by a discussion on co-worker support which was shown to be an important additional theme.

### **3.7.1 Flexible Work Arrangements**

Flexible work arrangements are one of the key domains that help employees manage conflict between work and family demands (Marlow et al., 2010). Part-time work, flexible working hours, job sharing and teleworking are some of the sub-domains of flexible work arrangements (Maxwell, 2005). Flexible work arrangements can embrace not only a number of formal arrangements, but also informal arrangements. Analysis of the interview data revealed that informal flexible working hour (is overwhelmingly the most common flexible working hour utilised by the employees of Bhutanese small and medium enterprises.

Flexible working hours arrangement may take different forms that cover the way the working hours are organised during the day, week or month. In the present study context, flexible working hours is understood as working hours which may be varied by individual employees in accordance with their own or their family's need, thereby enabling employees (albeit to a varying extent) to fulfill certain fundamental care needs within the family.

The element that the respondents (managers and employees) placed the most value on was for the work environment to be friendly and relaxed and built upon on mutual understanding and support for each other. Employees supporting each other seemed to play a key role in utilising flexible work arrangements. The interview data revealed that when individuals are confronted with performing conflicting roles between work and family, seeking support from their colleagues is the immediate alternative to rely on. Employees in Bhutanese small and medium enterprises seem to place a high value on the supportiveness of the informal context of an organisation.

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The majority of the participants are of the opinion that they are able to manage balance between work and family by utilising some kind of flexible options along with the support from their colleagues. To gain further insights about the supporting behaviour of the colleagues, the co-worker support dimension will be included as one of the additional variables to be investigated in Study 2.

The findings further suggest that employers/ managers are prepared to accommodate requests for flexibility when the employee's absence could be covered with internal arrangements without imposing extra costs on the organisation. Flexibility for employees usually related to being permitted to start work late or finish work early (often in order to collect children from school).

*In certain circumstances, where I need to attend teacher-parents meeting in the school, attend to a sick family member etc. I inform my manager over the phone about my late reporting to the office which is normally being agreed upon [Employee: Participant 16, F 27].*

Employers/managers seem to recognise that there are various reasons for offering flexible working hour arrangements, for example flexibility gives employees the ability to control when, where and how much time they work which contributes to improvement in allocation of work and life responsibilities. The majority of the employers/managers agreed that the flexible working hours arrangement is determined through mutual negotiation with their employees through informal mechanisms. None of the respondents (employers/managers) indicated the existence of the formal policy to regulate flexible working hour arrangements.

*There are no rules explaining the conditions of requesting work hour flexibility in our organisation. Whenever employees need some arrangement with the working hours, we usually negotiate informally and come to the consensus. In most cases, employees' requests are accepted believing that their requests are genuine [Employer: Participant 2, M 41].*

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Mutual understanding between manager and employees seems to play a significant role in making flexible working hour arrangements more meaningful and significant in helping manage work and family demands. This finding is close to Reilly's (2001) definition of mutual flexibility, where the needs of both employer and employee are considered in a mutual way. Employers in this study appear to value the expectations of their employees through respect of their personal obligations.

### **3.7.2 Part-Time**

The findings from the present study suggest that there is very little demand from employees for part-time employment within Bhutanese small and medium enterprises. This low demand could be because of certain perceptions of low pay, routine tasks and limited advancement opportunities compared to full-time employees. Such perceptions of employees may explain why family to work interference remains high among employees. In addition, the majority of the employees did not seem to be aware that part-time work arrangement could possibly be one of the viable options to help them balance between work and family life.

*Part-time work arrangement may not guarantee our employment. For me, having a full-time job with steady monthly income is important. I am not sure how part-time work arrangement will help us to balance between work and family [Employee: Participant 8, M 27].*

Small and medium enterprises in Bhutan are still in the development stage which may not require a wide range of human resources policies and practices like bigger corporate organisations in developed countries. Therefore, Bhutanese employers seem to remain uncertain about offering part-time work which could be due to a lack of awareness of the potential benefits or the economic sustainability and viability to do so, especially in small and medium size organisations.

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*I don't feel comfortable to initiate part-time work system, since I don't have much idea about this system. Instead of fostering the working atmosphere, I am worried it might disturb the existing healthy work culture [Manager: Participant 3, M 38].*

However, a bigger reason probably lies with the fact that flexible work arrangements deeply challenge the traditional way of working and the basic assumptions of how work should be done. Introducing part-time work may increase the administrative workload for the organisation, (for example hiring two part-timers for each full-time job would mean that the organisation has to maintain and process two sets of personnel records). Higher overheads may also be incurred as a result of having two people in one position. Certain jobs may need to be re-designed to make part-time work feasible and this may incur additional costs, which is very unlikely to be introduced by the small enterprises. In addition, the findings suggest that a lack of formal policy from the government with respect to part-time employment may have also discouraged the initiation and use of part-time work arrangement.

*Our organisation does not have any rules and regulations regarding part-time employment. I feel hesitate to implement such work system when we don't know much about it. I don't want to create commotion among the employees unnecessarily [Employer: Participant 5, M 43].*

Sandor (2011), and Plantenga and Remery (2009) have found that employees tend to show an unwillingness to voluntarily take part-time employment in the absence of a formal policy which ensures equal treatment through the same protections as for full-time employees.

### **3.7.3 Job Sharing**

Job sharing was the third sub-domain of flexible work arrangement examined in the current study. Job sharing is defined as “the practice of having two different

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employees performing the tasks of one full-time position” (Bliss & Thornton, 2010, p.18). Job sharing could present a variety of benefits both to employees and employers. For employees, job sharing could allow for flexibility that can help improve their work–family balance. For parents raising children, job sharing can be extremely beneficial because it allows parents to retain their positions and continue on their path professionally (Collins & Krause, 1984).

The finding from this study indicated that job sharing practice is not a popular option among the employees of Bhutanese small and medium enterprises. Part of the reason for this may be due to some misconceptions regarding the value and feasibility of job sharing (Baker et al., 2007). Additional costs and difficulty in maintaining accountability seem to be the primary concern for the employers for not initiating job sharing practice.

*I have never thought of implementing job sharing work system in my organisation. Our annual turnover is barely sufficient to meet the operating expenses and we don't have the luxury to introduce such system. Who will take the responsibility if something goes wrong? [Employer: Participant 5, M 41].*

Another reason for employees not demanding the job sharing option could also be because of the low income. Collins and Krause (1984) have shown that one of the major disadvantages to job sharing is less pay. For an employee who needs the income associated with a full-time job, job sharing may not be considered an appropriate arrangement. There can also be the potential risk of competing personalities between job sharers leading to a dysfunctional relationship.

#### **3.7.4 Teleworking**

The final sub-domain of flexible work arrangement examined in this was teleworking. Teleworking is defined broadly as working from anywhere at any time

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(Kurland & Bailey, 1999), or performing one's work duties at a remote location. The term telework is used interchangeably with telecommuting and virtual work (Gajendran & Harrison, 2007; Siha & Monroe, 2006). As a practice, it is becoming increasingly common internationally (Davis & Polonko, 2003). However, the finding from the Bhutanese small and medium enterprises reports a different scenario, where the teleworking as part of a flexible work arrangement has never been practised at all. The traditional onsite work culture still dominates over distributed forms of working suggesting face-to-face interaction with co-workers, supervisors and clients is an integral part of the Bhutanese social system. Such hesitation in the context of Bhutanese small and medium enterprises could also be due to underdeveloped ICT, poor and unreliable internet services.

### **3.7.5 Leave**

Compared to other work life balance domains in this study, the leave domain is more formalised in terms of policy and practices. Employees are entitled to various types of leave such as maternity and paternity leave and family reasons (casual, bereavement, sick and extraordinary leave) which are either paid or unpaid leave. However, an informal practice of allowing leave continues to operate to a large extent alongside the formal policy. Although it is expected that leave is regulated in accordance to policy, in reality the findings reveal that employers and employees negotiate with each other based on informal relationships to reach an agreement about leave practices.

### **3.7.6 Childcare Arrangements**

Formal off-site and on-site child care facilities for working parents of small and medium enterprises are relatively non-existent in Bhutan. The introduction and development of family friendly practices such as workplace childcare and nurseries

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might not be implemented by the small and medium enterprises due to the high perceived costs (Dex & Scheibl, 2001). This finding by Dex and Scheibl (2001) is directly in line with resource-based theories predictions of expected efficiency gains. Small organisations are predicted to be less likely to offer costly benefits to employees since their resources will not support these costs nor will there be administrative systems in place to support them. No formal policy exists regarding the provision of childcare facilities and services within Bhutanese small and medium enterprises.

*I think it will remain as a distant dream for small organisations to provide support and services like child care. Such support services would demand huge investment which is beyond the scope of small enterprises. Neither the government regulations require us to provide such services [Employer: Participant 6, M41].*

According to the findings, families (parents, grandparents, aunts and siblings) are the main providers of child care for the working parents. This arrangement still continues to exist and is driven by a strong Bhutanese custom of joint family systems. Assistance from family members is the most widespread arrangement being used, followed by employing a baby sitter/nanny in a few cases.

*I don't really worry about child care centre. I have my family members taking care of my children while I am at work. Knowing that my child is in safe hand enables me to stay focused at work [Employee: Participant 4, F33].*

### **3.7.7 Supportive Arrangements**

Employers or managers play an important role in the effectiveness of family friendly programs because they may encourage or discourage employees to participate in work–family programs (Milliken et al., 1998). Allen et al. (2013) suggest that



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employees whose employers/ managers support their efforts to balance work and family are less likely to experience work–life conflicts and will be more inclined to take up available work–family programs. Findings and discussion on supportive arrangements relating to employee counselling, work–family management training and dissemination of information are presented below in the context of Bhutanese small and medium enterprises.

The findings from this study suggest that Bhutanese small and medium enterprises have not introduced formal supportive arrangements like employee assisted programs. This finding aligns with Dex and Scheibl (2001) who argue that the introduction of costly supportive arrangements are largely outside the scope of the small and medium enterprises. Bhutanese small and medium enterprises only assist employees by referring them to external counselling units. However, some financial support is made available from the organisation for those employees who require professional support for excessive use of alcohol and other substances. According to some of the employers, such support mechanisms were initiated to look after the wellbeing of the employees without any policy pressure.

*I think it is our moral responsibility to help employees to come out of alcohol and other substances. We provide some financial support if they want to seek professional support. Such options are provided to the employees considering their overall wellbeing [Employer: Participant 7, M 39].*

Employee's work–family balance training is important for small and medium enterprises to maintain or improve the performance of individuals that will indirectly boost the growth of the organisation (Gooderham, Parry, & Ringdal, 2008). Although, employees' work–family balance management training was the focus of the discussion, the finding reveals that Bhutanese small and medium enterprises are

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oriented more towards general informal training approaches which are ad-hoc, fragmented and flexible, lacking formal structure and objectives. According to Gibb (1997) and Johnson (2002) there are a variety of reasons to support the fact that a formal training approach is not pursued by small organisations: the high training cost, high opportunity cost of attending the formal training courses and perceived lack of relevance of on the job.

The findings in this study suggest that small and medium enterprises in Bhutan do not offer any specific training through their human resource policies and practices that will help manage the balance between work and family demands. However, employees are given an opportunity to attend training depending on the availability and with little or no cost. The majority of employer respondents pointed out that no separate budget is allocated for any specific training programs for their employees. However, interview data revealed that employees who had an opportunity to participate in some informal training programs were found to be useful in some ways or another. This situation may be partly explained by Mathis and Jackson (2008) who argue that an informal training approach enables employees to learn informally by asking questions, and getting advice from other colleagues and their supervisors which may help establish better working relationships.

Dissemination of information could be another support mechanism organisations can provide to their employees. Communicating relevant information such as an organisation's human resource policies and procedures is expected to help employees enhance their work-life balance. For example, if employees are aware of certain flexibility that they can utilise to help them balance between work-family demands this is expected to enhance their work-life balance. The majority of small and medium enterprises in this study do not have any formal information dissemination

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system in place and all employees use direct communication with their employer/manager for any issues relating to human resource practices. As expected, informal direct methods of information sharing between employers and employees is the dominant arrangement in Bhutanese small and medium enterprises and not just limited to work–family balance issues but on anything they feel is necessary to communicate. A similar finding was also made by Harris, Reid and McAdam (2004) where they observed small firms in the UK operating informally when sharing information between employers and employees.

Further, the findings suggest that employees in Bhutanese small and medium enterprises tend to be satisfied with the amount of information they receive from their employer/ manager. This may be because it might be easier in small organisations to seek any information through close working relationships. Further, employees seem to view written forms of information to be less critical in small organisations where there is more opportunity for face-to-face contact between employer and employees.

### **3.7.8 Co-workers Support**

The findings from Study 1 revealed co-worker support could be one important theme beside the themes identified by Maxwell (2005) that appears to help employees manage the balance between work and family demands. In the work and family literature, co-worker support is usually viewed as an emotional coping construct (Thompson & Cavallaro, 2007; Thompson, Kirk, & Brown, 2005; Thompson & Prottas, 2005). A negative relationship has generally been found between co-worker support and work interfering with family but a weaker relationship with family interfering with work (Carlson & Perrewe, 1999; Thompson & Prottas, 2005; Van Daalen, Willemsen, & Sanders, 2006). Analyses of the interview data of the

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employees in the present study suggests that supporting each other on a regular basis is embedded in their work culture. The potential explanation for reporting high co-worker support within Bhutanese small and medium enterprises could be because the people working in Bhutanese small and medium enterprises are expected to be largely their own family members. The presence of family relationships could support requesting and then unconditionally extending support whenever required.

Co-workers support can possibly provide unique advantages over other types of support. For instance, co-workers can provide immediate support to fellow colleagues when the need arises. Analyses of the data revealed that picking up a shift was a dominant co-worker support behaviour being practised by the employees.

*Supporting each other is very common in our office. Whenever I have to leave the office due to some emergency, my colleagues would not mind to fill my absence. In return, I also reciprocate in helping them whenever needed. I think we have built that much of trust in each other. [Employee: Participant 3, F28].*

In conclusion, employees in the small and medium enterprises in Bhutan mainly relied upon informal flexible working hours practices and co-worker support in order to balance the multiple demands in their lives. This system seems to work well as it was based on mutual understanding between employers and employees as well as strong support from co-workers. These main findings formed the basis in revising the conceptual framework and designing the survey questionnaire for Study 2 which is presented in the next chapter.

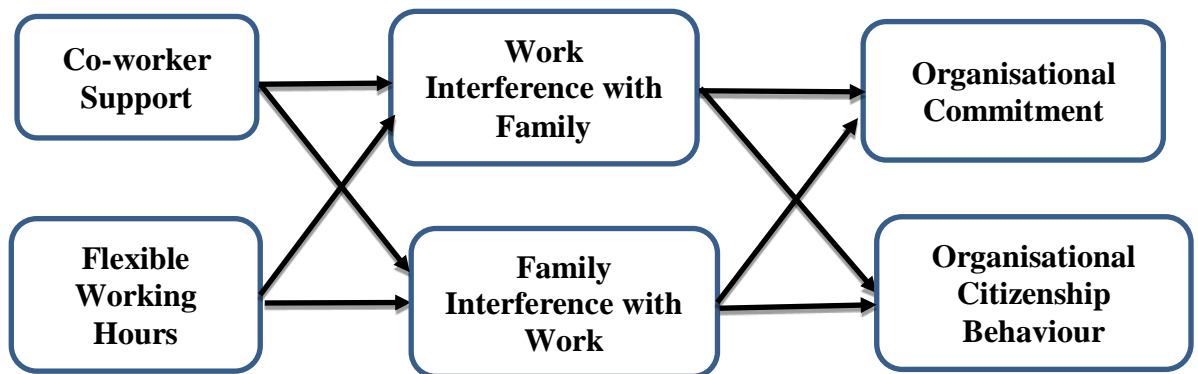
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## Chapter 4: Study 2

### 4.1 Introduction

Based on the findings from Study 1, a modified conceptual model is proposed (See *Figure 4.1*) to provide an overall framework for Study 2. The relationship among the variables shown in *Figure 4.1* has been explained earlier in Chapter Two apart from co-workers variable. The role of co-worker support in helping manage the balance between work and family conflict was found to be important in Study 1. As illustrated in *Figure 4.1* support from co-workers is expected to help employees manage the balance between conflicting role demands of work and family. This is because co-workers have the ability to provide both tangible and emotional support to their colleagues in the workplace (Seiger & Wiese, 2009).

An additional review of the literature is included on the role of co-worker support in helping manage the balance between work and family conflict in more detail under section 4.2 below. The chapter then presents the research hypotheses to be tested in Study 2 followed by the methodology and the results using Structural Equation Modelling. The next section discusses additional literature on co-worker support which was added in the modified conceptual model as the result of Study 1 findings.



**Figure 4.1: Revised Conceptual Model**

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## **4.2 Co-worker Support**

In the work–family literature, co-worker support is usually viewed as an emotional coping construct (Thompson & Cavallaro, 2007; Thompson & Prottas, 2005; Van Daalen et al., 2006). The studies that have examined the relationship between co-worker support and work–family conflict have generally found that individuals who receive higher co-worker support are better able to reduce work–family conflict (Kossek et al., 2011; Thompson & Prottas, 2005; Van Daalen et al., 2006).

According to Liao et al. (2004, p.37) co-worker support is defined as “the extent that individuals view other workers at their organisation as being helpful and supportive of them”. This type of support is expected to include caring for fellow co-workers, giving them tangible aid and providing them with useful information on any changes in work schedules (Ducharme & Martin, 2000; Parris, 2003). Co-worker support has the ability to make a working environment a pleasant or an unpleasant place to work. Chiabura and Harrison (2008) argue that the social relations of the workplace make a key contribution to employees’ job satisfaction, productivity and well-being which ultimately results in a high level of employee commitment and citizenship behaviour.

The present study focuses on examining the influence of employees’ experience of informal co-worker support in managing work and family interference. Informal support involves support mechanisms that organisations encourage employees to use unofficially to help reduce conflict between work and family demands (Behson, 2005). Co-workers have the ability to influence the social environment at work and they can have a large impact on whether or not an employee is able to balance time between work and non-work life (Liao, 2011). Work–family conflict can be reduced when a co-worker helps an employee cope with the competing demands between

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one's work and non-work life (Frone, Yardley, & Markel, 1997; Thompson & Prottas, 2006). Mentoring another employee is one such example of co-worker support.

There are a number of ways co-workers can provide assistance in work and family responsibilities, including covering/swapping job duties or shifts, providing materials or information a co-worker may have missed while attending to a family matter, or backing up a co-worker leaving work to attend to a sick child or family member. In addition to providing tangible backup, co-workers are also able to provide socio-emotional support. Co-worker socio-emotional support has been linked with decreased physiological strain and depression, as well as increased job performance, organisational commitment, and work-group and family cohesion (Thompson & Cavallaro, 2007).

Some studies find that co-worker support could in fact have negative consequences. Co-workers' behaviours may be viewed as political or self-enhancing and therefore it may not always be associated with constructive work attitudes. Accepting support from co-workers may suggest incompetence on behalf of the person accepting the support. Given that peers are usually regarded as equal, support from co-workers may suggest a lack of ability or independence (Seiger & Wiese, 2009). Despite this, there is overwhelming evidence that co-worker support has many positive effects in the workplace (Marcinkus, Whelan-Berry, & Gordon, 2007). Previous studies have shown employees' job satisfaction can increase when co-workers are actively supportive of one another (Beehr, 1986; Pollock, Whitbred, & Contractor, 2000).

Interest in co-worker support has been heightened lately due to greater diversity in the workplace and a growing focus on team forms of work organisations (Seiger & Wiese, 2009). The present research focusses on small organisations where working

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in teams is expected to occur on a daily basis. In an environment where teamwork is high employees are very likely to discuss ideas, seek support from other co-workers more openly and honestly, thus leading to them possibly experiencing less work and family conflict.

In conclusion, the role of co-worker support in reducing work–family conflict has been underrepresented in the extant literature particularly in small and medium organisations. As discussed earlier, small and medium organisations are considered as the engine of growth for both developed and developing countries. Given the increasing trend for small organisations to organise work around teams and the associated increase in the design of interdependent work (Raabe & Beehr, 2003), co-workers have a unique opportunity to provide support to one another which may help to reduce conflict between work and family. Therefore, the present study expects to enhance our understanding about the role of co-worker support in work and family conflict from the context of small and medium organisations. Based on the review of the extant literature and the discussion provided above, the following hypotheses are proposed to be tested.

***Hypothesis 1<sub>a</sub>:*** *Employees who receive a higher level of co-worker support are more likely to experience lower work interference with family and are more likely to report a higher level of organisational commitment and organisational citizenship behaviour.*

***Hypothesis 1<sub>b</sub>:*** *Employees who receive a higher level of co-worker support are more likely to experience lower family interference with work and are more likely to report a higher level of organisational commitment and organisational citizenship behaviour.*



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**Hypothesis 2<sub>a</sub>:** *Employees who utilise informal flexible work hours are more likely to experience lower work interference with family and are more likely to report a higher level of organisational commitment and organisational citizenship behaviour.*

**Hypothesis 2<sub>b</sub>:** *Employees who utilise informal flexible work hours are more likely to experience lower family interference with work and are more likely to report a higher level of organisational commitment and organisational citizenship behaviour.*

### **4.3 Research Methodology**

This section of the chapter provides the overview of the method adopted in Study 2. Based on the findings from Study 1, the conceptual model was modified which was highlighted in the beginning of this chapter. A cross sectional quantitative research design was adopted in this study. The following sections discuss the sampling strategy, data collection method, research instruments, pre-testing survey questionnaire, piloting the survey and process of data analysis.

#### **4.3.1 Population and Sample Frame**

The target population for the study included all the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) employees of seven Dzongkhags (districts) in Bhutan. These seven Dzongkhags are comparatively developed with a higher concentration of the corporate sector including the presence of more small and medium enterprises compared to other districts. Further, these districts have better access to internet connectivity which was seen to be crucial when administering the survey online. The list of organisations was obtained from the data base maintained by the Bhutan Chamber of Commerce and Industry. This data base provides details of all of the organisations located throughout the country.

A sample size between 300 and 350 respondents was sought in this study. For performing factor analysis, sample size above 300 is considered to be a reasonable

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sample size (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1996). Accordingly, 160 organisations were selected on the assumption that each organisation would have at least two to five employees with the minimum of two years work experience in the same organisation and would make up a sample size of 300 – 350 respondents. One hundred and sixty organisations were selected across a range of sectors comprising trade, service, production and manufacturing and contract and construction.

An individual letter was emailed to the manager/ employer of all 160 selected organisations requesting their participation in the research as per approved procedure of the QUT's Human Research Ethics Committee with the ethics approval number: 1400000034. Further, an additional request was also made to provide the name, employment duration and email ID of their current employees. One hundred and seven organisations responded showing their willingness to participate in this research project and furnished the requested information of their employees.

#### **4.3.2 Participants**

The participants in this research were compiled through the examination of the employee information list provided by each organisation. The criterion of a minimum of two years work experience in the same organisation was applied to ensure that all participants had good experience of utilisation of informal human resource practices in their respective organisations. Previous studies (e.g., Barrett & Mayson, 2007; Cassell, Nadin, Gray, & Clegg, 2002) have also included an appropriate length of two to three years in related studies. All who met the minimum criteria of two years work experience were selected to be the participants. A total of 842 employees (483 male and 359 female) from 107 different organisations qualified to be the participants for this study.

Respondents' gender, educational qualification, age and participating organisation profile are relevant personal data. While demographic information has no impact on the level of analysis of this study, this reporting may provide a generalised view in terms of male and female participation in employment in the developing country context. Table 4.1 shows the respondent and organisation profile.

**Table 4.1: Respondents' Profile**

Variable	Category	Number	%
Gender	Male	191	60.1
	Female	127	39.9
Age	Below 26 years	24	7.50
	26 – 35 years	129	40.6
	36 – 45 years	118	37.1
	46 – 55 years	39	12.3
	56 years & above	8	2.50
Educational qualifications	Vocational Certificate	14	4.40
	High school	27	8.50
	Higher secondary school	4	1.30
	Diploma	15	4.70
	Bachelor's degree	66	20.8
	Master's degree	161	50.6
		31	9.70
Organisation category	Trade sector	29	27.0
	Service sector	38	36.0
	Production &	21	20.0
	Contract & construction	19	17.0

Table 4.1 shows that the workforce is still dominated by males, but only marginally higher than females. The highest representatives of the respondents (40.6%) are from the age group of 26 to 35 years closely followed by a relatively older generation (37.1%) within the age group of 36 to 45 years. Individuals falling within the range of 26 to 45 years are representative of employees expected to have multiple roles to play apart from working (e.g., taking care of their children and parents). The majority of the respondents had a bachelor's degree qualification which may have helped them to understand and respond appropriately. Respondents in this study represent

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relatively equally across four different sectors which might help to interpret the results in terms of generalisability of the findings.

#### **4.3.3 Data Collection**

Online survey invitations were sent to 842 employees from a total of 107 organisations. Out of 842 survey invitations, 334 (40%) responses were received. Upon assessing each response, 16 respondents submitted only a partially completed survey. These 16 respondents were discarded from the final analysis. Therefore, the final sample for this study was 318 (191 male and 127 female) with a response rate of 38%. This response rate provides a good representation across the sample of SMEs. Of 107 small and medium enterprises, 29 represented trade sector, 38 represented service sector, 21 represented production and manufacturing sector and 19 were from contract and construction sector.

An explanation of the purpose of this survey and rationale was provided to the respondents. Information on the research administrator, the research supervisors, the University, and contact information was provided along with a statement of voluntary participation. If a participant of this study no longer wished to participate they were given an option to close the survey. The anonymity of the participants was preserved as the survey was designed in such a way that the research team did not receive information regarding who the participants were.

#### **4.4 Measures**

Survey measures included both existing validated measures as well as those that were developed for the purpose of this study. Each of the measures used in the current study is discussed briefly below.

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#### **4.4.1 Usage of Informal Flexible Working Hours**

The item used in examining usage of informal flexible working hours was adopted from Maxwell's four domains of family friendly human resource policies and practices. Maxwell (2005) distinguishes four main domains of family friendly human resource policies and practices: flexible work arrangements, leaves, childcare arrangements and supportive arrangements. Each domain further constitutes four to six sub-domains. As reported earlier, findings from Study 1 revealed that only one sub-domain (flexible working hours) within the flexible work arrangements domain was relevant in the context of Bhutanese small and medium enterprises. Participants were asked to respond on a 5-point Likert scale (*1 never – 5 always*) on a single item (opportunity to decide your own starting and finishing time).

#### **4.4.2 Co-worker Support Scale**

Co-worker support was measured using a 10-item scale developed by Ducharme and Martin (2000). Using a 5-point Likert scale, respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement on a scale ranging from (1) *strongly disagree* to (5) *strongly agree*, with regard to perceptions of co-worker support (Refer Appendix 3). A higher score indicated higher co-worker support. The items included: "*I feel close to my co-workers,*" and "*My co-workers are helpful in getting my job done.*" A recent study by Sloan, Newhouse, and Thompson (2013) used the same scale with a reported co-efficient of 0.76.

#### **4.4.3 Work and Family Conflict Scale**

The scale used in the current study to measure work and family conflict is a validated instrument developed by Carlson et al. (2000). A 9-item scale measures work interference with family. The items included: "*My work keeps me from my family activities more than I would like,*" and "*I am often so emotionally drained when I get*

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*home from work that it prevents me from contributing to my family*". Family interference with work was also measured with a 9-item scale. The items included: *"I have to miss work activities due to the amount of time I must spend on family responsibilities,"* and *"Due to stress at home, I am often preoccupied with family matters at work"*. All items are rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale (Refer Appendix 4), ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (5). Higher scores indicate higher conflict. A study by Vieira, Lopez, and Matos (2014) on Portuguese working parents is a recent study conducted using this 18-item scale that measures the two dimensions of conflict. The co-efficient alphas reported in their study were 0.87 and 0.85 for work interference with family and family interference with work respectively.

#### **4.4.4 Organisational Commitment Scale**

Affective, continuance and normative commitment were measured using three 6-item scales developed by Meyer, Allen, and Smith (1993). Sample items for affective commitment included *'I do not feel "emotionally attached" to this organisation'* and *'I would be happy to spend the rest of my career with this organisation.'* Continuance and normative commitment sample items included *'I feel that I have too few options to consider leaving this organisation'* and *'I would feel guilty if I left my organisation now'* respectively. Using a 5-point Likert scale, respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement on a scale ranging from (1) *strongly disagree* to (5) *strongly agree* (Refer Appendix 5). Higher scores indicated a higher commitment level. A study conducted by Gellatly, Hunter, Currie, and Irving (2013) is one example where they have used the commitment scale developed by Meyer, Allen, and Smith (1993). The co-efficient alphas reported in their study were 0.85 for

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affective commitment, 0.83 for continuance commitment and 0.77 for normative commitment.

#### **4.4.5 Organisational Citizenship Behaviour Scale**

Altruism, civic virtue and sportsmanship dimensions of organisational citizenship behaviour were assessed with a 9-item organisational citizenship behaviour scale developed by Raineri, Paille, and Morin (2012) adapted from Podsakoff and MacKenzie (1994). Each dimension was comprised of three items each (Refer *Appendix 6*). Previous studies, for example Jena and Goswami (2014), have used the same instruments and their study has reported co-efficient alpha of 0.76 for altruism, 0.78 for civic virtue and 0.72 for sportsmanship dimensions of organisational citizenship behaviour. Sample item for altruism dimension of organisational citizenship behaviour included '*I act as a peacemaker when others in the organisation have disagreements.*' Sample item for civic virtue dimension of organisational citizenship behaviour included '*I attend and actively participate in organisation meetings*' and sample item for sportsmanship dimension included '*I tend to make problems bigger than they are at work (R).*' All items are rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale, ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (5).

The conscientiousness and courtesy dimension of organisational citizenship behaviour is assessed with five items each developed by Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman, and Fetter (1990). Items for conscientiousness included '*I do not take extra breaks*' and '*I do not abuse the rights of others*' for courtesy. The conscientiousness and courtesy dimensions were made up of five items each. Responses to the participants were given on 5-point Likert scales (*1 strongly disagree – 5 strongly agree*).

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Higher scores indicated higher engagement in citizenship behaviour (Refer *Appendix 6*). A study by Ucanok and Karabati (2013) adopted the same scale developed by Podsakoff et al. (1990) to examine values of work centrality on organisational citizenship behaviour in small and medium enterprises in Turkey. The co-efficient alpha for conscientiousness and courtesy were reported at 0.80 and 0.73 respectively in their study.

#### **4.5 Pre-Testing the Survey Questionnaire**

Pre-testing of the survey questionnaire is considered to be one of the important processes of the questionnaire construction phase. Examining for glitches in wording of questions and lack of clarity in instructions are some of the main purposes for pre-testing the survey questionnaire (Cavana, Delahaye, & Sekaran, 2001). The survey questionnaire for this study was pre-tested with eight research students from Bhutan studying at QUT in Brisbane.

Participants involved in pre-testing the survey instruments provided a suggestion to modify or replace the survey questions that pertain to conscientiousness and courtesy dimensions of organisational citizenship behaviour which they found difficult to understand. Consequently, items suggested by Podsakoff et al. (1990) were sent again to the same participants to check their understanding and were reported to be easier to understand and relevant in the context of the Bhutanese participants. As a result, five items each for conscientiousness and courtesy dimensions of organisational citizenship behaviour developed by Podsakoff et al. (1990) were used in the pilot survey.



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#### **4.6 Piloting Survey Instruments**

Piloting research instruments before the actual survey addresses possible issues, including but not limited to checking that instructions are comprehensible; assessing the wordings of the survey; examining the reliability of results and evaluating the statistical and analytical processes. Five small and medium enterprises were randomly selected from the list maintained by the Bhutan Chamber of Commerce and Industries. A letter was sent to the head of the organisations requesting information (name, gender, employment tenure, email address) of their current employees. A list of 48 employees was received in total from the five organisations. Employees who had been working for a minimum of two years in the same organisation were selected as the respondents for this pilot study. Following the assessment of the employees' information, 37 employees qualified to take part in the survey. Subsequently, the survey link was sent to all 37 selected respondents through email. Within a period of less than two weeks, 25 provided their responses. One submitted an incomplete survey which was not included in the analysis. No specific problems in the survey questionnaire were identified by any of the respondents. The responses were collected online using the Survey Monkey web based tool. Respondents for the pilot survey comprised 10 males and 14 females with their employment duration ranging from three to seven years in the same organisation. These five small and medium enterprises were not included in the actual survey. The same process was used for the pilot study as outlined previously for the main study.

Descriptive statistics of the pilot study revealed that the internal reliability of the items for a few scales reported alpha values less than the acceptable threshold level of 0.70 (Nunnally, 1978). Close investigation of those scales that reported low reliability was found to be due to the range restriction. Further, the descriptive

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statistics revealed that responses were concentrated on similar options which have resulted in low average inter-item correlation, thus, reporting low internal reliability of the items. A small sample size is another factor which contributed to low internal reliability. No other major drawbacks were reported during the piloting phase. Therefore, the survey items that were used in the pilot were used in the final survey.

#### **4.7 Process of Data Analysis**

The data collected through Survey Monkey online was analysed and is presented in the following section. The overall model was tested through Structural equation modelling using Amos version 22. Structural equation modelling is a powerful quantitative data analytical technique which estimates and tests theoretical relationships between/among latent and/or observed variables and also combines regression and factor analysis (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1996). Structural equation modelling is also a path analytical method for handling multiple relationships and assessing relationships from exploratory analysis to confirmatory analysis (Hair, Anderson, Tatham, & Black, 1992). It has also been used in similar studies towards examining the impact of the predictors of organisational commitment and organisational citizenship behaviour (e.g., Cho & Johanson, 2008; Jena & Goswami, 2014; Yaghoubi, Salarzahi, & Moloudi, 2013). This program estimates a series of causal relationships and shows parameter estimates as well as path links among variables in the conceptual model. Structural equation modelling also estimates multiple regression equations simultaneously through specifying the structural model. This likewise allows modelling with latent variables through modelling the measurement errors that may be associated with observed indicators (Hair et al., 1992).

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As this research used a self-administered questionnaire, response error (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1996) was an issue as the researcher had no control over how it was completed. Hence, the relevant data screening techniques such as descriptive statistics, treatment of missing data, and identification of outliers are discussed in this section.

#### **4.7.1 Examination of Data Entry and Missing Data**

The data analysis proceeded with the examination of data entry and handling of missing data. In order to gain a high level of precision in the data entry process, a double check was performed. Firstly, all entries were verified case by case and as a second check, descriptive statistics including frequency distribution, mean and standard deviation were conducted and verified. The frequency distribution statistics did not show any major lapses in the data entry process. The accuracy of the data entry into the data set was approximately 99.25%. Apart from those 16 respondents which were discarded from the analysis for completing the survey partially, the rest did not have any missing data.

#### **4.7.2 Assessment of Normality and Outliers**

Normality in the data is often a conventional assumption in the estimation process (Bai & Ng, 2005). Data distribution with either a highly skewed nature or with high kurtosis is indicative of non-normality which has random effects on specification or estimation (Hall & Wang, 2005). This non-normality may exist due to the presence of outlier cases in the data set. As Tabachnick and Fidell (1996) argued, “an outlier is a case with such an extreme value on one variable (a univariate outlier) or such a strange combination of scores on two or more variables (multivariate outlier) that they distort statistics” (p.66). Therefore, an attempt was made to examine the normality of the data and to search for outlier cases. At the first stage, descriptive

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statistics analysis using the mean score of components of the dependent and the independent variables was conducted (*Refer Appendix 7*). The result confirms that there is no univariate non-normality present in the data set because kurtosis scores for all the variables do not exceed the maximum level of normality range ( $\leq 3$ ) and these may not affect the overall findings of the study (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1996). Further, the sample size of 318 also satisfies the Hulland, Chow, and Lam (1996) recommendation of 200 or more for any complex structural model analysis.

#### **4.8 Measurement Constructs**

To proceed with measuring the fit, there are some interrelated statistical techniques usually used to analyse the data as a supportive stream. Therefore, this section examines the reliability scores for the construct measures followed by confirmatory factor analysis. The reliability tests examine the internal consistency of the item in a measure to determine whether each observed variable should be retained or any exclusions should be performed. This process follows the development of an individual measurement model for each construct measure to confirmatory factor analysis and the overall measurement model to check the dimensionality of the construct and validity of the measures.

##### **4.8.1 Fit Indices**

The use of Structural Equation Modelling has steadily gained attention in the business literature. Structural equation modelling is a quantitative data analytical technique which specifies, estimates and tests theoretical relationships between observed endogenous variables and latent unobserved exogenous variables (Byrne, 2001).

Researchers use different fit indexes to test the model fit. A review of the literature suggests there is no uniformity among the researchers on the use of fit indexes.

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Taking sample sensitivity and model complexity effect into account, Chi Square ( $\chi^2$ ), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Goodness of Fit Index (GFI), Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) and Standardised Root Mean Residual covariance (SRMR) are used in this study for evaluating fit indices because these have been commonly used and reported in the literature (Hulland et al., 1996). Fit indices and desired threshold level of fit are shown in Table 4.2.

**Table 4.2: Fit Indices and Desires Level of Fit**

Measure	Threshold
CMIN/DF	< 2.00 = Good; < 5.00 = Adequate
CFI	>.95 = Good; >.90 = Adequate
RMSEA	<.05 = Good; <.08 = Adequate
GFI	>.90 = Good; >.80 = Adequate
SRMR	<.05 = Good

*Source:* Adopted from Byrne (2001), Holmes-Smith, Coote, & Cunningham (2004), Hulland et al. (1996), and Kline (2005).

## 4.8.2 Confirmatory Factor Analysis

This section of the thesis focuses on all key findings in relation to measurement model fit with confirmatory factor analysis. As its power, confirmatory factor analysis incorporates the testing of unidimensionality and evaluates a data set by confirming the underlying structure on the basis of theoretical ground (Bentler, 1990). This further suggests simplification, modification or any required refinement in measurement model for theory testing and examining the level of fit. Confirmatory factor analysis can be performed to test the fit for each measure. The findings for each measure are discussed in the following sections.

### 4.8.2.1 Co-worker Support: Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Co-worker support was measured using 10 items. Initial inspection of the inter-item correlation matrix revealed that co-worker support item 3 (*My co-workers take a personal interest in me*), item 6 (*My co-workers would fill in while I am absent*) and

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item 10 (*My co-workers will pitch in and help*) were poorly correlated with all other items in the scale. These items were subjected to a confirmatory factor analysis, the results of which are provided in *Appendix 8*. The fit indices suggested a poor fit model. Examination of the loadings indicated that the standardised regression weights for items 3, 6 and 10 were 0.52, 0.58 and 0.46 respectively which were very low compared to other item's loadings. An *ad hoc* attempt was made to test the model without excluding any of the above mentioned low loaded items which exhibited inadequate fit to the data with  $\chi^2$  value of 7.373 ( $df = 34$ ,  $p = .001$ ), CFI = .877, GFI = .875, RMSEA = .142 and SRMR = .071. Upon deletion of items 3, 6 and 10, all fit indices showed significant improvement which exhibited comparatively better loading with reduced  $\chi^2$  value from 250.68 ( $df = 34$ ,  $p = .001$ ) to 18.148 ( $df = 10$ ,  $p = .024$ ). Only the seven items were used to analyse the final co-workers support construct.

The probable reason for three items loading poorly with other items could be because of their interpretation against other items. The wording for these three items seems to be different from the rest of the items. For example, item 10 (*My co-workers will pitch in and help*) looks difficult to comprehend quickly compared to item 2 (*My co-workers are friendly with me*).

#### **4.8.2.2 Work Interference with family: Confirmatory Factor Analysis**

Work Interference with Family (WIF) was measured using nine items, three items each from time, strain and behavioural based work interference with family. Initial inspection of the inter-item correlation matrix revealed that time based work interference with family item 1 (*My work keeps me from my family activities more than I would like*) and strain based work interference with family item 2 (*I am often so emotionally drained when I get home from work that it prevents me from*

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*contributing to my family*) were correlated poorly with all other items in the scale. Negative wording of the items 1 and 2 could be the possible reason for correlating poorly with other items. Before making any decision to delete those poorly correlated items, all the items were factorised to examine the initial results which are provided in *Appendix 9*. The fit indices suggested a fairly good fit model, except RMSEA was not able to meet the threshold level of  $\leq .08$ . The initial model test results exhibited acceptable fit to the data with  $\chi^2$  value of 79.360 ( $df = 24$ ,  $p = .000$ ), CFI = .936, GFI = .850, RMSEA = .096 and SRMR = .047. Upon deletion of the two poor loading items, all fit indices showed significant improvement with reduced  $\chi^2$  value from 79.360 ( $df = 34$ ,  $p = .001$ ) to 38.399 ( $df = 11$ ,  $p = .044$ ). The composite construct reliability for this measure is .78 which signifies that these items are considered reliable for this measure.

#### ***4.8.2.3 Family Interference with Work: Confirmatory Factor Analysis***

Family Interference with Work was measured using nine items, three items each from time, strain and behavioural based work interference with family. Initial inspection of the inter-item correlation matrix revealed that all the items were correlated to each other well. An attempt was made to test the model with all nine items which exhibited adequate fit to the data with  $\chi^2$  value of 25.831 ( $df = 24$ ,  $p = .362$ ) and other fit indices results are shown in *Appendix 10*. The initial investigation of the items seems to meet the minimum threshold level of the fit indices used in this study. Therefore, no items were subjected to deletion from family interference with work construct. Composite construct reliability of .76 further justifies that these items are reliable for this measure.

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#### **4.8.2.4 Affective Commitment: Confirmatory Factor Analysis**

Affective commitment was measured using six items. Initial inspection of the inter-item correlation matrix revealed that item 3 (*I do not feel a strong sense of “belonging” to my organisation*) and item 5 (*I do not feel “part of the family” at my organisation*) were poorly correlated with all other items in the scale. Further, investigation of the loadings indicated that the standardised regression weights for items 3 and 5 were .42 and .46 respectively which is very low. It is possible that the negative wording of these items contributed to their lower loadings.

The initial investigation of the model revealed inadequate fit to the data with  $\chi^2$  value of 133.623 ( $df = 9$ ,  $p = .000$ ) and none of the other fit indices were meeting the minimum threshold level. The initial model test results are shown in *Appendix 11*. After deletion of the two poor loading items, all fit indices showed significant improvement which exhibited comparatively better loading with reduced  $\chi^2$  value from 133.623 ( $df = 9$ ,  $p = .000$ ) to 2.353 ( $df = 2$ ,  $p = .308$ ). The composite construct reliability of .73 justifies that these four items are reliable for measuring affective organisational commitment construct in this study.

#### **4.8.2.5 Continuance Commitment: Confirmatory Factor Analysis**

Continuance commitment was measured using a 6-item scale. All of these items were subjected to a confirmatory factor analysis, and the initial results are reported in *Appendix 12*. The results of the confirmatory factor analysis of the six items indicated that the model was a poor fit to the data with a high  $\chi^2$  value of 77.351 ( $df = 9$ ,  $p = .000$ ) and none of the other fit indices have achieved the minimum requirement. Examination of the covariance structure in the modification indices section of this construct measure specifically suggested that at least two modifications were necessary due to associated misspecification. The overall



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findings of initial analysis for this measure clearly suggest that item 1 (*Right now, staying with my organisation is a matter of necessity as much as desire*) and item 4 (*I feel that I have too few options to consider leaving this organisation*) were responsible for the poor fit to the model although their standardised loadings were within the acceptable range. It is possible that item 2 (*It would be very hard for me to leave my organisation right now, even if I wanted to*) might have captured response for items 1 and 4. Excluding items 1 and 4, the model showed a significant improvement with  $\chi^2$  value reduced from 969.155 ( $df = 9, p = .001$ ) to 12.530 ( $df = 7, p = .084$ ). The composite construct reliability for this measure was .92 which is well above the acceptable level.

#### **4.8.2.6 Normative Commitment: CFA**

Similar to affective and continuance commitment, normative organisational commitment was measured using six items. Initial inspection of the inter-item correlation matrix revealed that item 1 (*I do not feel any obligation to remain with my current employer*) was poorly correlated with all other five items in the scale. Further, investigation of the loadings indicated that the standardised regression weight for item 1 was .59 which is very low. Negative wording of the item could be the possible reason for low loading. The results of the confirmatory factor analysis of the 1 item indicated that the model was a poor fit to the data with a  $\chi^2$  value of 15.265 ( $df = 9, p = .000$ ), despite reasonable CFI and SRMR scores as shown in Appendix 13.

After excluding item 1, all fit indices showed significant improvement which exhibited comparatively better loading with reduced  $\chi^2$  value from 137.385 ( $df = 9, p = .000$ ) to 12.097 ( $df = 5, p = .033$ ). The composite construct reliability of .77

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justifies that these five items are reliable for measuring normative organisational commitment construct in this study.

#### ***4.8.2.7 Organisational Citizenship Behaviour – Altruism: Confirmatory Factor Analysis***

Altruism dimension of Organisational Citizenship Behaviour was measured using a 3-item scale. Initial examination of the inter-item correlation matrix revealed that all three items were correlated to each other well. An *ad hoc* attempt was made to test the model which exhibited adequate fit to the data with  $\chi^2$  value of 8.118( $df = 2$ ,  $p = .017$ ) and other fit indices results are shown in *Appendix 14*. The initial investigation of the items seems to qualify the minimum threshold level of the fit indices used in this study and no items were excluded. Composite construct reliability of altruism construct was .81 indicating that these items are reliable for this measure.

#### ***4.8.2.8 Organisational Citizenship Behaviour – Civic Virtue: Confirmatory Factor Analysis***

Civic virtue construct was measured by three items. The initial verification of the inter-item correlations matrix revealed that all three items are correlated to each other reasonably. Examination of the standardised regression weights for these items had relatively low loadings, but the loadings exceeded the minimum recommended level of standardised loadings of .40 (Lewis & Byrd, 2003). The confirmatory factor analysis results of these items revealed that the model was adequately fit to the data with a  $\chi^2$  value of 4.664 ( $df = 2$ ,  $p = .097$ ) and with reasonable scores for other fit indices as shown in *Appendix 15*. No items were required to be excluded to measure civic virtue dimension of organisational citizenship behaviour. The composite construct reliability score for this measure was .76 which exhibited that these three items are reliable measures.

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#### **4.8.2.9 Organisational Citizenship Behaviour – Sportsmanship: Confirmatory Factor Analysis**

Sportsmanship dimension of organisational citizenship behaviour was measured using 3-item scale. Initial investigation of the inter-item correlation matrix revealed that all three items were correlated to each other reasonably. The results of the initial confirmatory factor analysis showed adequate fit to the data with  $\chi^2$  value of 2.876( $df = 1$ ,  $p = .090$ ) and other fit indices results are shown in *Appendix 16*. Composite construct reliability of sportsmanship construct was .86 indicating that these three items are reliable for the measurement of sportsmanship construct.

#### **4.8.2.10 Organisational Citizenship Behaviour – Conscientiousness: Confirmatory Factor Analysis**

A 5-item scale was used to measure conscientiousness dimension of organisational citizenship behaviour. The initial examination of the inter-item correlations matrix revealed that item 2 (*I believe in giving an honest day's work for an honest day's pay*) and item 5 (*I obey organisation's rules and regulations even when no one is watching*) were shown to correlate lower compared to the other three items. Items 2 and 5 appear to be too personal response compared to other items which might have contributed for poor correlation with other items. Examination of the standardised regression weights for items 2 and 5 were .59 and .54 respectively which exceeded the minimum recommended level of standardised loadings of .40 (Lewis & Byrd, 2003).

The confirmatory factor analysis results of all five items revealed that the model had reasonable fit to the data with a  $\chi^2$  value of 11.226( $df = 5$ ,  $p = .012$ ) and with reasonable scores for other fit indices as shown in *Appendix 17*. Therefore, no items were required to be excluded in measuring conscientious dimension of organisational

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citizenship behaviour. Further, the composite construct reliability score of .80 justifies that five items are reliable to measure this construct.

#### ***4.8.2.11 Organisational Citizenship Behaviour – Courtesy: Confirmatory Factor Analysis***

Courtesy dimension of organisational citizenship behaviour was measured using five items. Initial inspection of the inter-item correlation matrix revealed that item 1 (*I try to avoid creating problems for co-workers*) was poorly correlated with the other four items in the scale. This could be because the respondents in this study may not have experienced a major problem that required them to avoid creating problems with their co-workers. Further, investigation of the loadings indicated that the standardised regression weight for item 1 was .41 which is very low. The results of the confirmatory factor analysis of the five items indicated that the model was a poor fit to the data with a  $\chi^2$  value of 28.146 ( $df = 5, p = .000$ ), despite reasonable CFI and SRMR scores as shown in *Appendix 18*.

After excluding item 1, all fit indices showed significant improvement which exhibited comparatively better loading with reduced  $\chi^2$  value from 28.146 ( $df = 5, p = .000$ ) to 2.345 ( $df = 2, p = .310$ ). The composite construct reliability of .72 justifies that these four items are reliable for measuring courtesy dimension construct in this study.

In this process 11 items have been excluded from the individual models to achieve a better fit to the data. Initially, all 66 items were examined in the overall measurement model. The fit statistics are presented in column 1 of Table 4.3 and indicates a weak fit to the data. Therefore, the final overall measurement model was tested with 55 items that are retained at the individual model test stage. The model fit statistics of the final overall measurement model test are shown in column 2 of Table 4.3.

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**Table 4.3: Summary of Overall (Initial and Final) Measurement Model**

<b>Fit Indices</b>	<b>Overall Measurement Model</b>	
	<b>Initial (66 items) 1</b>	<b>Final (55 items) 2</b>
$\chi^2$ (df)	2026.044 (1029)	971.262 (856)
CMIN	6.768	3.622
CFI	0.722	0.933
GFI	0.642	0.951
RMSEA	0.097	0.064
SRMR	0.072	0.028

The fit statistics justify the exclusion of 11 items from different construct measures. This reduces  $\chi^2$  Value by 1054.782 ( $df$  173,  $p < .001$ ) along with improving other fit indices in the final overall measurement model. The application of suggested modifications in the individual measurement model also helped improve the other fit indices in the overall measurement model. The retained 55 items in different construct measures suggest reasonable congruity between data and the measurement model. The other statistical outputs further suggest that all items are loaded satisfactorily on their respective factors with minimum cross loading onto different factors. Thus, this further confirmed that the items for each construct are converged into their single factor model and that each measure is discriminated from others in the overall model.

#### **4.9 Bivariate Correlations between Latent Variables**

To gain fundamental theoretical precision from the data, correlations between construct measures were then examined by conducting overall measurement model analysis using retained items in structural equation modelling. Table 4.4 shows the mean, standard deviations, inter-correlations and internal consistency reliabilities for the various measures used in the study. Key measures included in this study were (1)

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Informal Flexible Working Hours (FWHs) (2) Co-worker support (3) Work interference with family (WIF) (4) Family interference with work (FIW) (5) Affective organisational commitment (6) Continuance organisational commitment (7) Normative organisational commitment (8) Altruism (9) Civic virtue (10) Sportsmanship (11) Conscientiousness and (12) Courtesy. Co-efficient alphas of the study's scales are above the acceptable threshold level of 0.70 (Nunnally, 1978).

**Table 4.4: Mean, Standard Deviations, Inter-correlations, Reliabilities of Measured Variables**

	Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1	Informal FWHs	3.17	0.76	-											
2	Co-worker support	3.70	0.75	.24**	(.85)										
3	Work interference with family	2.06	0.48	-.26**	-.35**	(.78)									
4	Family interference with work	2.60	0.50	-.37**	-.10	.29**	(.76)								
5	Affective Org. commitment	3.66	0.74	.25**	.44**	-.26**	-.11*	(.73)							
6	Continuance Org. commitment	3.23	1.04	.09	.15**	-.10*	-.07	.31**	(.92)						
7	Normative Org. commitment	3.29	0.95	.10	.42**	-.09	-.09	.86***	.76**	(.77)					
8	Altruism	3.82	0.79	.11*	.37**	-.14*	-.13*	.23**	.24**	.13*	(.81)				
9	Civic virtue	3.12	0.86	.08	.44**	-.19**	-.08	.21**	.16**	.09	.88**	(.76)			
10	Sportsmanship	3.68	0.95	.09	.34**	-.08	-.06	.43**	.11*	.06	.39**	.38**	(.86)		
11	Conscientiousness	3.26	0.88	.10	.21**	-.08	-.09	.12**	.10*	.09	.12*	.08	.08	(.80)	
12	Courtesy	3.32	0.82	.22**	.29**	-.12*	-.14*	.15**	.09	.10*	.15**	.17**	.12*	.89**	(.72)

*Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient appears in the diagonals within the brackets where applicable*

**Note:** \*\* Correlations is significant at the 0.01 level (2 tailed), \* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2 tailed), N = 318





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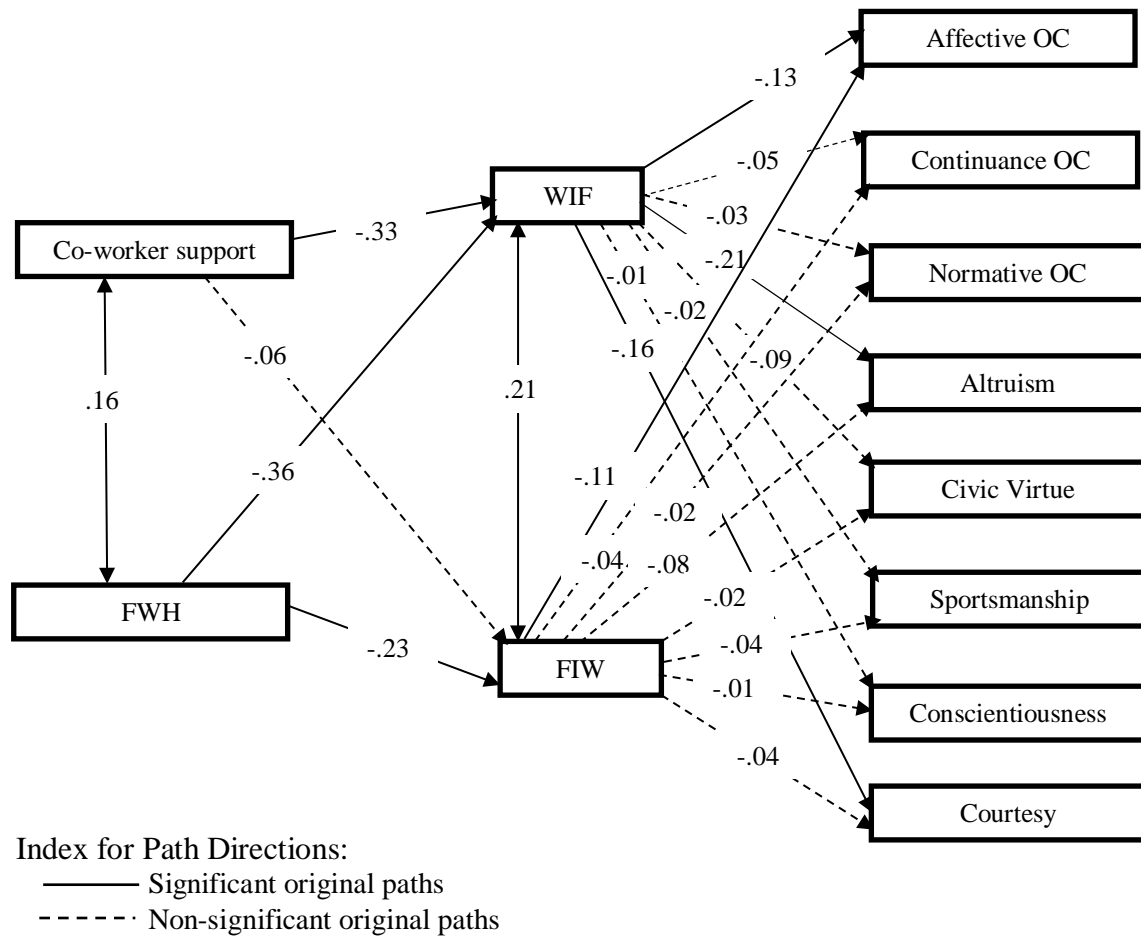
#### 4.10 Testing the Proposed Model and Fit Indices

This section of the chapter discusses the testing of the proposed model shown in Figure 4.1 with final 55 items (12 concepts). The structural model to be tested in this section was developed based on the findings from Study 1 and also based on theoretical ground using 12 construct measures. To achieve the parsimonious fit between the data and the theoretical model, all possible exogenous variables were allowed to co-vary in the proposed structural model (Holmes-Smith *et al.*, 2004; Kline, 2005). That means the full Structural equation modelling including all indicators was tested, except those previously deleted. The fit indices of the hypothesised model are presented in Table 4.5.

**Table 4.5: Proposed Initial Model: SEM test Output, Fit Indices and desired level of Fit**

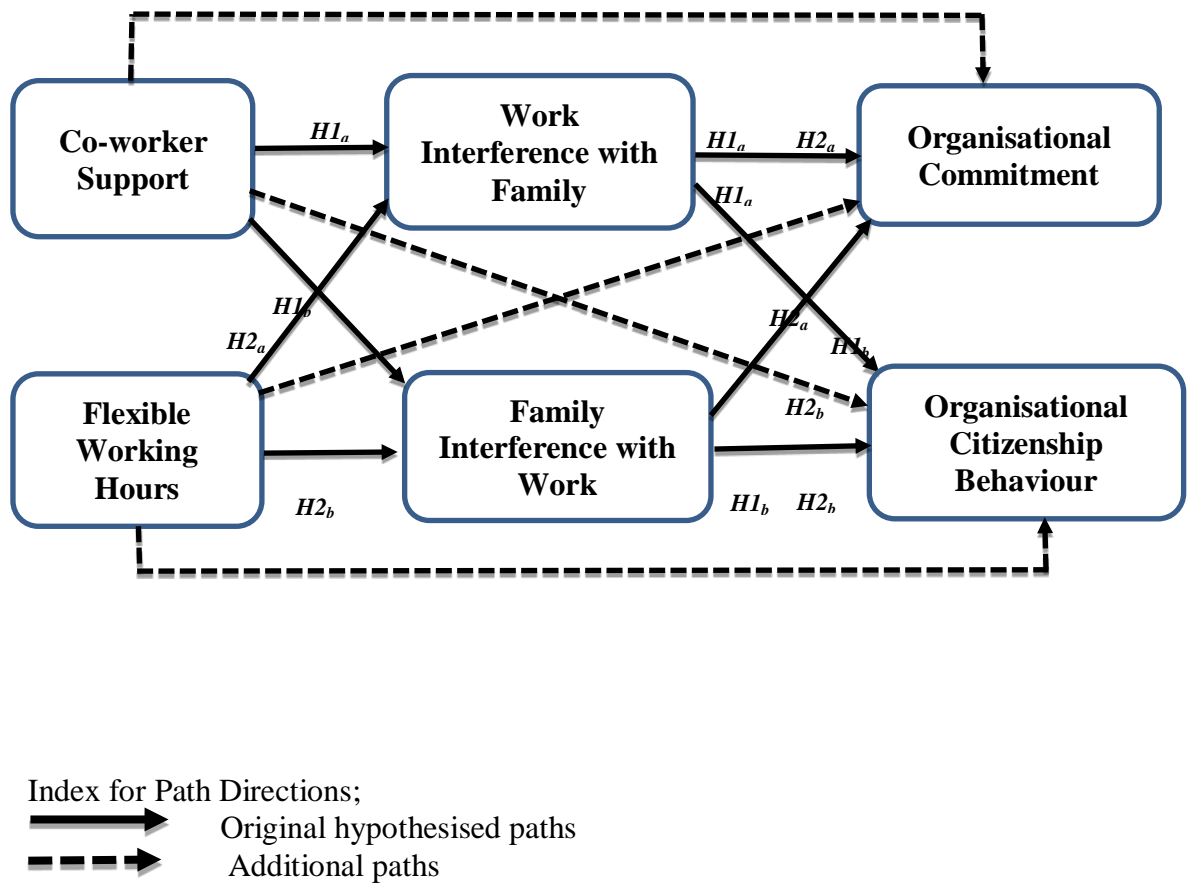
Level of Model Fit	Overall Model Fit				
	CMIN/DF	CFI	GFI	RMSEA	SRMR
Threshold	< 5.00	>.90	>.90	<.08	<.05
Model Fit	3.622	.933	.951	.064	.028
$\chi^2$ (df) in Proposed Model			1084.620 (869)		
$\chi^2$ (df) in Measurement Model			971.262 (856)		

The tested proposed structural model is shown in Figure 4.2 with estimated standardised regression coefficient in the path links in the structural equation modelling model. Significant and non-significant paths are shown in straight and broken lines respectively.



**Figure 4.2: Tested Proposed Structural Model with  $\beta$  values**

The review of the modification indices (MIs) for the regression weights suggests a direct path from independent variables to dependent variables. Parameters with relatively large scores were shown to be associated among the paths between independent variables and dependent variables. Towards getting a better structural model fit, this modification was essential to minimise the  $\chi^2$  difference and to improve other fit indices. Accordingly, additional paths were added to the proposed structural model as shown in Figure 4.3 as reported by modification indices results.



**Figure 4.3: Proposed Modified Model with Additional Direct Paths from IVs to DVs**

By adding these paths in the proposed structural model, the results revealed some improvement in the overall fit indices ( $\chi^2$  difference is 41.358 with  $df$  9 between initial proposed model and modified model) as shown in Table 4.6. The fully tested modified model is shown in *Appendix 19*.

**Table 4.6: Modified Proposed Model: SEM Test Outputs, Fit Indices and Desired level**

Level of Model Fit	Overall Model Fit				
	CMIN/DF	CFI	GFI	RMSEA	SRMR
Threshold	< 5.00	>.90	>.90	<.08	<.05
Modified Proposed Model	2.416	.935	.957	.062	.020
$\chi^2$ (df) in Modified Proposed Model		1012.620 (865)			

#### 4.11 Hypotheses Testing

The set of hypotheses proposed in the beginning of this chapter are being examined by using outputs of the structural equation modelling through direct and indirect effect in this section. Direct and indirect effects were treated using the bootstrapping method with bias-correlated confidence estimates (MacKinnon, Lockwood, & Williams, 2004). In the present study, the 95% confidence interval of the indirect effects was obtained with 2000 bootstrap resamples. The reported structural equation modelling outputs did not show any significant indirect effects indicating that work interference with family and family interference with work does not play any significant role in mediating the relationship between independent variables and dependent variables. The reported structural equation modelling findings are assessed based on estimated path coefficient  $\beta$  value and  $p$  value. The standard decision rule of  $p$  value  $\leq .05$  applies here to decide the significance of the path coefficient between the variables (Byrne, 2001). However, results indicated mostly the direct effect between the variables. The results of each hypothesis testing are presented next.

##### Hypothesis 1a

Hypothesis 1a (*Employees who receive a higher level of co-worker support are more likely to experience lower work interference with family and are more likely to report a higher level of organisational commitment and organisational citizenship behaviour*) was tested by running the full structural model (see Figure 4.3) and examining the significance of direct and indirect effects. It predicted that level of support an employee receives from their co-workers to help reduce work interference

with family and to report high level of organisational commitment and organisational citizenship behaviour. However, the result indicated only direct effects were significant (see Table 4.7) indicating a significant direct relationship between independent and dependent variables. In other words, work interference with family does mediate the relationship as proposed in the model. Therefore, Hypothesis 1a was partially supported.

**Table 4.7: Table of Direct and Indirect effects for Hypothesis 1a**

Hypothesis 1a	Direct effect	Indirect effect	Result
Co-worker support → WIF → Affective OC	0.397***	0.034 (ns)	Direct effect
Co-worker support → WIF → Continuance OC	0.143**	0.009 (ns)	Direct effect
Co-worker support → WIF → Normative OC	0.154**	0.011 (ns)	Direct effect
Co-worker support → WIF → Altruism	0.367***	0.009 (ns)	Direct effect
Co-worker support → WIF → Civic Virtue	0.428***	0.020 (ns)	Direct effect
Co-worker support → WIF → Sportsmanship	0.320***	0.025 (ns)	Direct effect
Co-worker support → WIF → Conscientiousness	0.226***	0.013 (ns)	Direct effect
Co-worker support → WIF → Courtesy	0.283***	0.016 (ns)	Direct effect

Note: \*\*\* =  $p < 0.001$ ; \*\* =  $p < 0.01$ ; \* =  $p < 0.05$ ; ns = “not significant”

### **Hypothesis 1b**

Similarly, Hypothesis 1b (*Employees who receive a higher level of co-worker support are more likely to experience lower family interference with work and are more likely to report a higher level of organisational commitment and organisational citizenship behaviour*) predicted level of support an employee receives from their co-workers to help reduce family interference with work and to report high level of

organisational commitment and organisational citizenship behaviour. The result showed only direct relationships between the independent and dependent variables are significant (see Table 4.8) and no mediation effect of family interference with work was reported. Hypothesis 1b, therefore, was partially supported.

**Table 4.8: Table of Direct and Indirect effects for Hypothesis 1b**

Hypothesis 1b	Direct effect	Indirect effect	Result
Co-worker support → FIW → Affective OC	0.436***	0.005 (ns)	Direct effect
Co-worker support → FIW → Continuance OC	0.157**	0.004 (ns)	Direct effect
Co-worker support → FIW → Normative OC	0.115*	0.008 (ns)	Direct effect
Co-worker support → FIW → Altruism	0.382***	0.006 (ns)	Direct effect
Co-worker support → FIW → Civic Virtue	0.451***	0.009 (ns)	Direct effect
Co-worker support → FIW → Sportsmanship	0.384***	0.008 (ns)	Direct effect
Co-worker support → FIW → Conscientiousness	0.213***	0.004 (ns)	Direct effect
Co-worker support → FIW → Courtesy	0.266***	0.006 (ns)	Direct effect

*Note:* \*\*\* =  $p < 0.001$ ; \*\* =  $p < 0.01$ ; \* =  $p < 0.05$ ; ns = “not significant”

## Hypothesis 2a

Hypothesis 2a (*Employees who utilise informal flexible work hours are more likely to experience lower work interference with family and are more likely to report a higher level of organisational commitment and organisational citizenship behaviour*) predicted that utilisation of informal flexible working hours to help reduce work interference with family and as a result to report high organisational commitment and organisational citizenship behaviour. However, results suggest a direct relationship with only affective dimension of organisational commitment and altruism and

courtesy dimensions of organisational citizenship behaviour (see Table 4.9). No mediation effect of work interference with family is reported since none of the indirect effects are significant. Therefore, Hypothesis 2a was not supported.

**Table 4.9: Table of Direct and Indirect effects for Hypothesis 2a**

Hypothesis 2a	Direct effect	Indirect effect	Result
FWH → WIF → Affective OC	0.246***	0.018 (ns)	Direct effect
FWH → WIF → Continuance OC	0.047 (ns)	0.006 (ns)	No effect
FWH → WIF → Normative OC	0.020 (ns)	0.008 (ns)	No effect
FWH → WIF → Altruism	0.152**	0.006 (ns)	Direct effect
FWH → WIF → Civic Virtue	0.090 (ns)	0.014 (ns)	No effect
FWH → WIF → Sportsmanship	0.009 (ns)	0.018 (ns)	No effect
FWH → WIF → Conscientiousness	0.006 (ns)	0.009 (ns)	No effect
FWH → WIF → Courtesy	0.265***	0.011 (ns)	Direct effect

Note: \*\*\* =  $p < 0.001$ ; \*\* =  $p < 0.01$ ; \* =  $p < 0.05$ ; ns = “not significant”

### Hypothesis 2b

Hypothesis 2b (*Employees who utilise informal flexible work hours are more likely to experience lower family interference with work and are more likely to report a higher level of organisational commitment and organisational citizenship behaviour*) also anticipated that utilisation of informal flexible working hours to help reduce family interference with work and to report high organisational commitment and organisational citizenship behaviour. From the eight proposed relationships, only one direct relationship between independent variables was shown to be related with one dimension (affective commitment) of organisational commitment. Similar to the

other hypotheses results, family interference with work showed no mediation effect on the proposed relationships as none of the indirect effects were significant (see Table 4.10). Therefore, Hypothesis 2*b* was not supported.

**Table 4.10: Table of Direct and Indirect effects for Hypothesis 2*b***

<b>Hypothesis 2<i>b</i></b>	<b>Direct effect</b>	<b>Indirect effect</b>	<b>Result</b>
FWH → FIW → Affective OC	0.135*	0.030 (ns)	Direct effect
FWH → FIW → Continuance OC	0.014 (ns)	0.027 (ns)	No effect
FWH → FIW → Normative OC	0.013 (ns)	0.026 (ns)	No effect
FWH → FIW → Altruism	0.033 (ns)	0.035 (ns)	No effect
FWH → FIW → Civic Virtue	0.054 (ns)	0.022 (ns)	No effect
FWH → FIW → Sportsmanship	0.023 (ns)	0.015 (ns)	No effect
FWH → FIW → Conscientiousness	0.013 (ns)	0.005 (ns)	No effect
FWH → FIW → Courtesy	0.006 (ns)	0.009 (ns)	No effect

*Note:* \*\*\* =  $p < 0.001$ ; \*\* =  $p < 0.01$ ; \* =  $p < 0.05$ ; ns = “not significant”

As can be seen in Tables 4.7 to 4.9, none of the indirect effects are significant. This suggests that work interference with family and family interference with work do not mediate the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. However, the results revealed a significant relationship between the variables of the primary interest for this study as reported in Figure 4.2. For example, one of the primary focuses of the current study was to investigate the link between informal usage of flexible working hours and work and family conflict. The analysis reported a significant negative relationship between utilisation of informal flexible working hours and work interference with family ( $\beta = -.227$ ,  $p < .001$ ), utilisation of informal



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flexible working hour practice and family interference with work ( $\beta = -.363, p < .001$ ). In addition, the relationship between co-worker support and work interference with family ( $\beta = -.328, p < .001$ ), co-worker support and family interference with work ( $\beta = -.062, p < .05$ ) have been shown to be significantly associated.

#### **4.12 Summary**

This chapter presented the analysis and the results of hypotheses testing through Structural Equation Modelling technique. The analysis of the results revealed only a direct relationship between the independent variable (co-worker support) with the dependent variables (organisational commitment and organisational citizenship behaviour) significantly thus supporting Hypothesis *1a* and Hypothesis *1b*. As stated earlier, no mediation effect of work interference with family and family interference with work was found.

On the other hand, informal flexible working hours is shown to relate with affective dimension of organisational commitment and altruism and courtesy dimensions of organisational citizenship behaviour partially supporting Hypothesis *2a* and Hypothesis *2b*. No mediation effects of work interference with family and family interference with work was reported in this relationship either.

As reported earlier in Figure 4.2, results from the study illustrated that utilisation of informal flexible working hours appears to play a significant role in helping manage the balance between work and family domains. In addition, employees who experience low conflict between work and family demands are shown to be more altruistic and courteous and to be emotionally committed to the organisation they work for.

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Employees' experience of co-worker support also seems to help manage the balance between work and family conflict. Further, the results indicate that employees who receive more support from their colleagues are more likely to have a positive attitude towards the organisation and are more likely to engage in extra role behaviour.

In conclusion, this study confirms that utilisation of informal flexible working hours and co-workers support has the potential to help employees balance between work and family lives. Further, employees who achieve a balance in their work and family commitments are more likely to be committed to their organisation and engage in certain types of organisational citizenship behaviour. The next chapter presents the overall discussion and conclusion of the study.

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## **Chapter 5: Discussions and Conclusion**

The current study focused on examining the role of human resource management practices in the management of work and family domains from a Bhutanese small and medium enterprises perspective. This final chapter discusses the major findings of the study, the research contributions and practical implications for organisations. The chapter concludes with the research limitations and directions for future research.

### **5.1 The Importance of Informal Flexibility**

The findings from both studies indicated the importance of flexible working hours (FWHs) for employees of Bhutanese small and medium enterprises, as well as the importance of being able to negotiate these informally with their manager. Flexible working hours, and the informality of these practices, will now be discussed.

Study 1 showed that informal flexible working hours is one of the key practices utilised by employees to help reduce conflict between work and family demands. In Study 2, a significant relationship was reported between usage of informal flexible working hours with the reduction in work and family conflict. This was evident for both work to family and family to work interference. Granting employees greater discretion and more control over their working time seems to enable employees to take on both work and family responsibilities without impacting too much on each role.

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Employees can determine the best way to allocate resources such as time, attention and energy into the work or family domain. Role conflict theory (Kahn et al., 1964) argues that when individual's limited resources can be invested where needed the most, it helps reduce the conflict from competing roles. From a time-based perspective this discretion over working hours can permit employees to adjust their schedule in a way that allows them to better manage family related activities, reduce time spent travelling to and from the workplace and create a schedule that is convenient for themselves.

Similarly, discretion over the timing of the work can help reduce an employee's experience of strain, another aspect of role-based conflict, in situations where work constraints could make it challenging to fulfill family roles and vice-versa. Employees in Bhutanese small and medium enterprises may, for example, use flexibility in working hours so that they have time to accompany their child to school before starting work. Employees can fulfill their parental role of ensuring their child gets to school safely, without being concerned about being late for work. The current findings would suggest that usage of flexible work hours is playing a critical role to help reduce conflict between work and family demands among the employees of Bhutanese small and medium enterprises.

The research also shows that flexible work hours are negotiated informally by employees from Bhutanese small and medium enterprises with their managers. Findings from both Study 1 and Study 2 seem to suggest that while small and medium enterprises in Bhutan do not have a formal policy/program on flexible work hours, this does not prevent employees from using flexible working hours informally. Negotiating the usage of flexible working hours informally with managers seems to be a viable option for many of these employees to help reduce work and family

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conflict. The opportunity to negotiate these arrangements at short notice may explain the informal approach taken by employees.

In summary, the findings from both studies show the importance of flexible work hours, as well as opportunity to negotiate these informally. Having informal arrangements in place around flexible working hours seem to be a very effective way of introducing flexibility to employees quickly and with minimum administrative effort.

## **5.2 Importance of Co-worker Support**

The findings from Study 1 revealed that co-worker support helps employees of Bhutanese small and medium enterprises to reduce work and family conflict. Interview results indicated that the most common form of assistance was covering for each other at work and offering to drop or pick up a colleague's child. It may be that the cultural value of collectivism plays a role in shaping this support behaviour among the employees of Bhutanese small and medium enterprises. Individuals in collectivist societies are shown to place high value on in-group solidarity and strong needs for affiliation among colleagues (Hui & Yee, 1994). Such collectivist cultural values may influence co-workers to help and serve others. This finding was investigated further with a larger sample of employees in Study 2. The findings from Study 2 indicated that co-worker support was useful only in reducing work interference with family but not family interference with work. The possible explanations for the findings from Study 2 are discussed next.

As the present study focuses on small and medium enterprises it could be expected that employees work closely with their co-workers as a team on a daily basis. Co-workers in the same team can provide immediate support to fellow colleagues at

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work when they need assistance. When they are part of the same team, employees are likely to have a better understanding of the work being conducted and as such find it easier to cover for their work colleagues. The co-worker support is provided on an ad hoc and informal basis. Eby et al. (2005) argue that informal support mechanisms have been found to consistently positively promote work and family balance through effectively reducing work interference with family.

From a role conflict theory perspective, it can be argued that co-worker support is a resource the individuals can rely upon to help reduce work interfering with family demands when faced with multiple conflicting roles. For example, co-workers can effectively support other colleagues to manage their work responsibilities by providing material or information a co-worker may have missed while attending to a family matter, or backing up a co-worker leaving work to attend to a sick family member.

A number of individuals working in small and medium organisations are often family members. Individuals who share similar or common characteristics such as a family relationship are more likely to form or already have a stronger informal relationship which possibly could enhance their cooperation and build a mutual benefiting exchange relationship. Cohesive work environments with collegial relationships could facilitate reciprocal relations in which employees are more co-operative and more socially involved. Such relationships among the co-workers could easily enable employees to seek or provide support when faced with work interference with their family obligations.

Another possible reason for the significant relationship between co-worker support and work interference with family in this study could be because of strong personal (but not family) relationships among the employees. Personal relationships between

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individuals and groups are shown to be more highly valued in Asian societies than in the West (Tan & Chee, 2005). Such relationships may encourage employees in a collectivist culture such as Bhutan to request assistance from their co-workers for day-to-day situations in a more personal and informal way, rather than a more formal organisational process to acquire permission. This personal relationship among the employees and informal way of seeking assistance from their co-workers seems to help their colleagues reduce work interference with family.

However, the findings from Study 2 suggest that co-worker support was not helpful in reducing family interference with work for employees of Bhutanese small and medium enterprises (only work interference with family). This may partly be explained from the Bhutanese family structure point of view. The Bhutanese custom of joint and extended family systems may not see co-worker support as beneficial to help reduce family interference with work. Easy access to the assistance from family members to help take care of family related issues could be seen as more practical and logical than to seek support from co-workers. Therefore, co-worker support is not seen to be related with family interference with work. One such example that was evident from Study 1 was that family members stepped in to assist with childcare support. When some portions of family roles are taken care of by family members the likelihood of an employee seeking support from co-workers is expected to be low, such that, the amount of co-worker support that the employee experiences does not seem to have any influence on their experience of family interference with work. The findings suggest that employees believe that support from their co-workers is not an effective or appropriate resource to help reduce family interfering with work, however it is very useful in helping reduce work interference with family.

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### **5.3 Relationship Between Informal Flexible Working Hours with Organisational Commitment and Organisational Citizenship Behaviour**

While there was no support in the findings for the mediation effects proposed in Study 2, some direct significant relationships were reported between the independent variables (informal flexible working hours FWHs and co-worker support) and the dependent variables (organisational commitment and organisational citizenship behaviour), partially supporting the hypotheses. The relationship reported between the informal flexible working hours and organisational commitment and organisational citizenship behaviour in this study will now be discussed.

Informal flexible working hours are significantly related to the affective dimension of organisational commitment which is consistent with previous research findings (Meyer et al., 1997; Newman, Thanacoody, & Hui, 2009). A reason for the significant link between informal FWHs and affective commitment in this study may be because of employees' positive feelings towards informal flexible working hour practices as a form of organisational support which would signify a supportive working culture in the organisation. If the organisation offers employees flexibility in determining their work schedules on an informal basis, this signals that the organisation may care about their wellbeing and non-work responsibilities. When employees feel they benefit from flexible work arrangement practices both personally and professionally, they are more likely to develop an emotional attachment to the organisation and a desire for affiliation with their organisation.

No relationships were found between informal flexible working hours with the continuance and normative dimensions of organisational commitment in this study. This may be partly because continuance and normative commitments are comparatively less focused on psychological belonging than affective commitment. When employees feel their organisations are supportive of them having greater



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control over scheduling their work, it is less likely for employees to feel their commitment to organisation is out of obligation or compulsion. Consistent with earlier studies (Allen & Meyer, 1996; De Clerq & Ruis, 2007; Jaskyte & Lee, 2009), the current study also supports the findings of other research that among the three dimensions of organisational commitment, affective commitment is one of the most widely reported outcomes within organisational commitment studies.

Organisational citizenship behaviour was another outcome variable investigated in this study. The findings from the current study show informal flexible working hours is only related to the altruism and courtesy dimensions of organisational citizenship behaviour. A significant relationship between flexible working hours with these two dimensions of organisational citizenship behaviour in this study may partially be explained by Buddhist beliefs. Bhutan being a Buddhist country, the majority of the respondents are expected to have faith in *Karma* (theory of cause and effect in Buddhism). Helping and being considerate to others is believed to be an important virtuous act one can engage in to reap the good *karmic* deeds. Accumulating good deeds is realised through helping others and acting with conscience (Leung, 2010). This strong belief in *Karma* may have influenced respondents to rate highly the altruism and courtesy dimensions of organisational citizenship behaviour.

The other possible reason for this significant relationship in this study may also be explained with the help of the social exchange theory and theory of reciprocity. The findings from the present study suggest that the organisation's willingness and support for employees to utilise flexible working hour practices to attend to other important demands makes employees feel they want to repay the good gesture of the organisation by doing something more than expected in the form of extra role behaviours (e.g., acting as a peacemaker when others in the organisation have a

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disagreement or avoiding creating problems for co-workers) without demanding more benefits from the organisation. Further, organisational support for employees in the utilisation of flexible working hour practices is likely to provide employees some freedom on when to work and how much to work. This could create a positive image in the minds of employees about the organisation which possibly could motivate employees to repay the organisation in the form of organisational citizenship behaviour as a goodwill gesture.

As indicated earlier, no relationship between informal flexible working hours was reported with the other three dimensions (civic virtue, sportsmanship and conscientiousness) of organisational citizenship behaviour. Employees' opportunity to use flexible working hours informally does not seem to have any impact on these three behaviours. This could be because employees do not see these three dimensions as important compared to the other two dimensions (altruism and courtesy). For example, attending organisational functions which are not mandatory may be seen as less important than helping other colleagues at the workplace. Further, negative wording of the questions (e.g., *I always find fault with what the organisation is doing*) may have also contributed for showing no relationship between informal flexible working hours with those three dimensions of organisational citizenship behaviour.

#### **5.4 Relationship Between Co-worker Support with Organisational Commitment and Organisational Citizenship Behaviour**

The results showed the amount of support employees receive from their co-workers was associated positively with all three dimensions of organisational commitment. This means that employees who receive more support from their co-workers tend to exhibit higher commitment to their organisation. This could be because co-workers

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either perform the same kind of work or complementary tasks, hence, co-worker support could be focused and situation related support. Given this reality, employees and their co-workers may engage more in social interactions at the workplace and these may shape their work experiences positively. These positive experiences could lead fellow employees to a feeling of attachment to the organisation. Empirical studies have also found that co-worker support influences organisational commitment (Iverson & Bittigieg, 1999; Mueller, Finley, Iverson, & Price, 1999; Rousseau & Aube, 2010).

Social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) also seems to be appropriate to help explain the reported relationship between co-worker support and organisational commitment. When co-workers and organisations are supportive of employees, they may develop an emotional attachment, continue to stay longer with their organisation and develop a sense of moral obligation to give back in return for the support they have received (Rousseau & Aube, 2010; Baral & Bhargava, 2010).

The traditional Bhutanese value of 'repaying kindness' may also explain the relationship between co-worker support and organisational commitment. In addition to universal values like harmony, tolerance and honesty and so on, the need for repaying kindness and recognition of interdependence are prominent features of the Bhutanese value system (Evans, 2009). For example, individuals are expected to render necessary support to each other and work collaboratively to help achieve organisational goals. Recognising the value of interdependence in the relationship, the organisation may be obliged to render necessary support to ensure the wellbeing of their employee. The employee in turn is expected to reciprocate the kindness shown by the employer with dedication and commitment.

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Similarly, the results indicated the amount of support employees receive from their co-workers was associated positively with all five dimensions of organisational citizenship behaviour. This relationship suggests that if a co-worker does a favour for an employee, the employee responds by doing more than is expected for the other employee and the organisation. The explanation for the reported relationship between co-worker support and organisational citizenship behaviour in the current study could be similar to that of commitment. One might think that if an employee perceives their co-workers as being supportive of them, they would like to be supportive of and return the kindness of their co-workers and organisation in return by exceeding their assigned duties at work. Indeed, there is support in the literature that co-workers who are supportive of one another are more likely to engage in organisational citizenship behaviour (Chiabura & Harrison, 2008).

### **5.5 Outcomes of Work and Family Interference**

The findings of this study revealed that when employees experience less interference from work and family roles, employees have greater affective organisational commitment or emotional attachment towards the organisation. In other words, when employees are able to fulfill their expectations, for example, spend quality time with family or are able to concentrate at work without worrying about their family, this may give them a sense of self-fulfilment and accomplishment. The current finding is consistent with previous research studies. For example Harris and Cameron (2005), and Mathieu and Zajac (1990) have found that individuals who experience less interference from work and family roles are generally happier and exhibit greater loyalty and commitment to the organisation.

The amount of interference employees experience between work and family roles does not seem to have any influence on continuance and normative components of

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organisational commitment. For example, employees' decision to continue their career with their present organisation or leave the organisation is not influenced by the amount of work and family interference they experience.

Employees' experience of work and family interference is shown to relate to the altruism and courtesy components of organisational citizenship behaviour. A significant and negative relationship between work interference with family with altruism and courtesy dimensions suggests that when employees experience less interference from work-related roles to family roles, they are more likely to volunteer in supporting their organisation to achieve its goals and engage more towards display considerate behaviours. Once again social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) may also explain the relationship between work interference with family and organisational citizenship behaviour. If employees feel that they are being supported by the organisation to help reduce work and family conflict, employees are more likely to reciprocate by engaging in extra role behaviours; the behaviours that are not mandated by their job duties. The *karmic* law of cause and effect in Buddhism as explained earlier under section 5.3 may also help explain the reported relationship in this case as well.

Overall, the results indicate that employee experience of lesser work and family conflict enhances their commitment to their organisation and influences them to engage more in extra role behaviours.

## **5.6 Research Contributions**

The findings of the current research contribute to the literature in both work–family conflict and human resource management practices in the following ways. First, they contribute to the understanding of how informal human resource practices play a significant role in helping employees to manage the balance between work and

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family demands. The findings of this study increase our understanding of how informal human resource practices can supplement the formal policies/programs to help enhance the wellbeing of the employees. Therefore, this study provides support for a link between informal human resource practices and employees' attempts in managing work and family responsibilities.

Second, creating avenues to negotiate flexibility informally is shown to contribute to managing employees' work and family balance. The findings from this current study also contribute to our understanding about the role of flexibility in the work place particularly in the context of an emerging economy. An important theme in the work and family literature is that organisations need to provide employees with flexible scheduling and work hours in order for them to facilitate work and family integration. The current study demonstrates that control of flexibility by employees is significant in reducing both work interference with family and family interference with work. Therefore, the current research findings contribute in improving our understanding of how work and family interference can potentially be reduced when employees have a greater flexible working hours.

Third, more attention to co-worker support has developed lately due to a growing focus on teams as forms of work (Seiger & Wiese, 2009). The current study suggests that informal organisational support from co-workers may be more influential than many formal organisational policies/programs in reducing work interference from family. Employees may perceive informal practices as a visible manifestation of organisational support. Consistent with organisational support theory, co-worker support may also be particularly good for enhancing perceived organisational support because such support is likely to be viewed as discretionary treatment (Lahey & Heller, 1988).

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Fourth, the present study has provided empirical support for the idea that family friendly human resource practices and social support have an effect on employees' intentions to stay or leave their organisation (organisational commitment) and also on employees' prosocial behaviour (organisational citizenship behaviour). While prior research has demonstrated the importance of flexible policies and supportive environment, the current findings suggest that informal human resource practices and informal support provide a mechanism for positive outcomes for organisations and employees.

### **5.7 Practical Implications**

The results of this research have practical implications that could be beneficial to employees and organisations in terms of a deeper understanding of the significance of a healthy balance between work and family demands and organisations' performance. For example, organisations need to create a culture to support informal human resource practices. The use of informal flexible working hours practices as one example of an informal practice has been shown to have a significant role in reducing work and family conflict. Employers and managers of small and medium enterprises could encourage the use of less formalised human resource practices, especially those small and medium enterprises which are not yet at the stage or do not have the resources to maintain a more formal set of human resource policies and practices.

In addition, by adopting family friendly practices such as informal flexible working hour options, organisations can try to limit the interference between work and family, and help ensure employee job satisfaction, organisational commitment and beneficial voluntary citizenship behaviours. By providing such an opportunity, organisations

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can actually increase the resource-base of employees and considerably reduce the instances of resource drain and depletion. By adopting and implementing options like flexibility, human resource managers will also help in the creation of an organisational culture, which is cognisant and respectful of employees' work and family needs. Consequently, such a culture will not only attract but also help in the retention of talented and committed employees.

Findings from the current study could also help employees and employers to recognise the importance of co-worker support as this factor is closely connected to helping reduce work interfering with family. Supporting informal mechanisms that encourage co-worker support could provide a win-win situation for both employees and organisations with minimum or at no additional cost. For example, organisations can conduct in-house awareness programs periodically to encourage their employees to seek assistance from their co-workers when facing difficulty in performing the job.

### **5.8 Limitations and Future Direction of the Study**

The findings of this research need to be interpreted in cognisance of a few limitations. First, a small sample of small and medium enterprises was accessed for this study. Future studies could examine the conceptual model developed in this study with a larger sample of small and medium enterprises so that the findings can be generalised across small and medium enterprises both in the context of developing and developed economies. The findings from this study cannot be generalised that easily to other developing countries and developed nations since this study was conducted in Bhutan which has some unique characteristics.

Second, the reliance of the study on self-report measurement means that the responses from the participants might not all be accurate and honest. Employees may



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have a tendency to rate themselves high on the positive qualities to indicate they are loyal and committed employees. Responses to items of a personal nature are likely to be influenced by social desirability, while answers to less sensitive items are not. For example, most of the respondents would have the tendency to rate strongly agree to the statement like “*I am one of the most hardworking employees in the organisation*” as opposed to the statement like “*I tend to make problems bigger than they are at work*”. This is undoubtedly a problem which calls for a degree of caution when interpreting data gathered through self-report measurement (Spector & Branick, 1995). Further, the use of a single item measure of flexible working hours in this study may have affected the findings, particularly from the reliability assessment point of view. It is commonly agreed that a single item measure is not smoothed out by the summation of the item scores to total scores unlike multi-item measure (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). In other words, there is no guarantee that the response collected through a single item measure is free from error. Future studies could consider using additional ways to collect data to investigate further the relationships proposed in the conceptual model in this study. Third, the cross-sectional design of this research limits making causal inferences. Future research would benefit from longitudinal designs capable of establishing causal relationships.

Finally, the human resource policies and practices explored in this study are quite Western in their concept and design which may be interpreted differently by Bhutanese employees and employers due to the difference in culture and value system. Therefore, future studies may consider using definitions of policies and practices and measures validated in an Asian context to enhance our understanding more holistically about causes and strategies of work and family conflict.

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## 5.9 Conclusion

In conclusion, this study has examined the role of formal and informal human resource management policies and practice to help manage the balance between work and family demands in the context of Bhutanese small and medium enterprises. This study examined and tested the complexity of work and family interference by expanding Western frameworks to take into consideration the boundaries between work and family within a Bhutanese context.

This study has provided some evidence to begin the process of evaluating informal human resource management practices that have been implicitly acknowledged as functional in the theoretical literature but have been neglected in empirical research (Barrett & Mayson, 2007; Dyer & Reda, 2010). Organisational interventions need to focus on the development of both formal and informal human resource management policies and practices and also on changing organisational culture to become more of a family supportive work culture. A key role can be played by the employees' immediate manager/employer, who can use informal practices to support employees in managing work and family conflict. Investing time and effort in the translation of these practices into real benefits could be an effective intervention in its own right and could have significant implications for improving levels of work and family balance for individuals.

The current study also reveals the importance of co-worker support in helping employees manage the balance between work and family domains. This finding suggests that building good co-worker support relationships may provide another avenue to improving employees' work-life balance. Increased job interdependence is likely to increase workers' knowledge of another's job as well as their ability to support one another up when necessary.

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In conclusion, the results of the present study suggest that informal flexible working hours and co-workers support are effective organisational responses to work and family conflict and influence employees' organisational commitment and engagement in organisational citizenship behaviour.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1

#### Study 1 – Interview Questions for HR Manager/Employer

1. What are some of the initiatives that your company provides to the employees in balancing time between work and other personal matters? (*Interviewer probe for details about the initiatives: formal/informal, policies and practices*).
2. Which of the initiatives are most popular among your employees? (*Interviewer probe for details about the usage: e.g which initiatives are being used most and which is not used at all*).
3. How much do you encourage the employees to make use of the work life balance initiatives? How do you do this?
4. What ways do your organization support these initiatives? (*Interviewer probe for details about the support: e.g if employees want to take a leave, want to reschedule the work etc.*).
5. To what extent work life balance initiatives are documented? (*Interviewer probe for details about the documentation: e.g recorded in HR policy, uploaded in the website etc.*).

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## Appendix 2:

### Study 1 – Interview Questions for Employees

1. What initiatives are been taken by the organization to balance work life of the employees? (*Interviewer probe for details about the initiatives: e.g flexi time, working from home, child care etc.*).
2. How much control would you say you have in scheduling your work hours? (e.g., are you free to set your own schedule)? Would you please give me some examples (*if applicable only*)
3. Which of the initiatives do you use most? Why? (*Interviewer probe: please give me some incidences that you have used it.*)
4. Which of the initiatives you have never used it? Why? (*Interviewer probe: please give me some reasons: too formal/lengthy process etc.*)
5. How much does your organization accommodates your request to look after your family or personal matters? (*Interviewer probe: please say about your experiences*).
6. How much do your coworkers help you to manage your work and personal or family life? (*Interviewer probe: please give me some examples of how your coworkers help you formally and informally.*)
7. How much support do you get from the organization in using the work life balance initiatives? How other employees have different experiences? (*Interviewer probe: please give me some examples the support rendered by the organization formally or informally*)
8. From your experience, to what extent the initiatives are documented? (*Interviewer probe for details about the documentation: e.g accessible from HR policy, website, other documents etc.*).

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### Appendix 3:

#### Co-worker Support Questionnaire

Please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with each statement.  
The scale ranges from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree

Statements					
My co-workers really care about me.					
I feel close to my co-workers.					
My co-workers take a personal interest in me.					
I feel appreciated by my co-workers.					
My co-workers are friendly to me.					
My co-workers would fill in while I am absent.					
My co-workers are helpful in getting my job done.					
My co-workers give useful advice on job problems.					
My co-workers assist me with unusual work problems.					
My co-workers will pitch in and help.					

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## Appendix 4:

### Work and Family Conflict Questionnaire

Please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with each statement.  
The scale ranges from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree

Statements					
My work keeps me from my family activities more than I would like.					
The time I must devote to my job keeps me from participating equally in household responsibilities and activities.					
I have to miss family activities due to the amount of time I must spend on work responsibilities.					
The time I spend on family responsibilities often interfere with my work responsibilities.					
The time I spend with my family often causes me not to spend time in activities at work that could be helpful to my career					
I have to miss work activities due to the amount of time I must spend on family responsibilities					
When I get home from work I am often too frazzled to participate in family activities/ responsibilities					
I am often so emotionally drained when I get home from work that it prevents me from contributing to my family.					
Due to all the pressures at work, sometimes when I come home I am too stressed to do the things I enjoy.					
Due to stress at home, I am often preoccupied with family matters at work.					
Because I am often stressed from family responsibilities, I have a hard time concentrating on my work					
Tension and anxiety from my family life often weakens my ability to do my job.					
The problem-solving behaviors I use in my job are not effective in resolving problems at home.					
Behavior that is effective and necessary for me at work would be counterproductive at home.					
The behaviors I perform that make me effective at work do not help me to be a better parent and spouse.					
The behaviors that work for me at home do not seem to be effective at work.					
Behavior that is effective and necessary for me at home would be counterproductive at work.					
The problem-solving behavior that work for me at home does not seem to be as useful at work.					

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## Appendix 5:

### Organisational Commitment Questionnaire

Please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with each statement.  
The scale ranges from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree

Statements					
I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organisation.					
I really feel as if this organisation's problem are my own.					
I do not feel a strong sense of "belonging" to my organisation.					
I do not feel "emotionally attached" to this organisation.					
I do not feel "part of the family" at my organisation.					
This organisation has a great deal of personal meaning for me.					
Right now, staying with my organisation is a matter of necessity as much as desire.					
It would be very hard for me to leave my organisation right now, even if I wanted to.					
Too much of my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave my organisation now.					
I feel that I have too few options to consider leaving this organisation.					
If I had not already put so much of myself into this organisation, I might consider working elsewhere					
One of the few negative consequences of leaving this organisation would be the scarcity of available alternatives.					
I do not feel any obligation to remain with my current employer.					
Even if it were to my advantage, I do not feel it would be right to leave my organisation now.					
I would feel guilty if I left my organisation now.					
This organisation deserves my loyalty.					
I would not leave my organisation right now because I have a sense of obligation to the people in it.					
I owe a great deal to my organisation					

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## Appendix 6:

### Organisational Citizenship Behaviour Questionnaire

Please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with each statement.  
The scale ranges from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree

Statements					
I act as a 'peacemaker' when others in the organisation have disagreements.					
I take steps to try to prevent problems with other personnel in the organisation.					
I am a stabilising influence in the organisation when disagreement occurs.					
I attend and actively participate in organisation meetings.					
I attend information sessions that agents are encouraged but not required to attend.					
I attend functions that are not required but help organisation image.					
I focus on what is wrong with the organisation rather than the positive side of it.					
I tend to make problems bigger than they are at work.					
I always find fault with what the organisation is doing.					
I am one of the most hardworking employees in the organisation.					
I believe in giving an honest day's work for an honest day's pay.					
My attendance at work is above the norm.					
I do not take extra breaks.					
I obey organisation's rules and regulations even when no one is watching.					
I try to avoid creating problems for co-workers.					
I consider the impact of my actions on co-workers.					
I do not abuse the rights of others.					
I take steps to try to prevent problems with other co-workers.					
I am mindful of how my behaviour affects other people's jobs.					

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**Appendix 7:**  
**Descriptive Statistics**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Min.</b>	<b>Max.</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Skewness</b>	<b>Kurtosis</b>
<b>FWH</b>	1	5	3.17	0.76	-0.28	0.43
<b>Co-worker support</b>	2	5	3.70	0.75	-0.74	-0.43
<b>WIF</b>	1	4	2.06	0.48	1.17	1.84
<b>FIW</b>	1	4	2.60	0.50	0.72	0.85
<b>Affective OC</b>	2	5	3.66	0.74	-0.41	-0.63
<b>Continuance OC</b>	1	5	3.23	1.04	-0.36	-0.48
<b>Normative OC</b>	1	5	3.29	0.95	-0.42	-0.83
<b>Altruism</b>	1	5	3.82	0.78	-1.25	0.72
<b>Civic Virtue</b>	1	5	3.28	0.85	-1.18	0.39
<b>Sportsmanship</b>	1	5	3.86	0.94	-0.94	0.08
<b>Conscientiousness</b>	1	5	3.37	0.87	-0.35	-0.44
<b>Courtesy</b>	1	5	3.38	0.82	-0.24	-0.08
Valid N = 318						



## Appendix 8:

### Summary of Initial Findings (CFA): Co-worker Support

Quest. Items	Item wording	Initial Standardise Loadings	Final Standardised Loadings		
Co_SUPP1	My co-workers really care about me.	.81	.83		
Co_SUPP2	I feel close to my co-workers.	.76	.78		
Co_SUPP4	I feel appreciated by my co-workers.	.73	.76		
Co_SUPP5	My co-workers are friendly to me.	.78	.82		
Co_SUPP7	My co-workers are helpful in getting my job done.	.84	.86		
Co_SUPP8	My co-workers give useful advice on job problems.	.86	.89		
Co_SUPP9	My co-workers assist me with unusual work problems.	.81	.84		
Co_SUPP3	My co-workers take a personal interest in me.	.52	-		
Co_SUPP6	My co-workers would fill in while I am absent.	.58	-		
Co_SUPP10	My co-workers will pitch in and help.	.46	-		
Achieved Fit Indices					
	CMIN/DF ( $\chi^2$ /df)	CFI	GFI	RMSEA	SRMR
Initial	7.373 (250.68/34)	.877	.875	.142	.071
Final	1.815 (18.148/10)	.992	.958	.051	.027
Composite Construct Reliability .85					

## Appendix 9:

### Summary of Initial Findings (CFA): Work Interference with Family

Quest.  Items	Item wording	Initial Standardise Loadings	Final Standardised Loadings		
TB_WIF2	The time I must devote to my job keeps me from participating equally in household responsibilities and activities.	.70	.72		
TB_WIF3	I have to miss family activities due to the amount of time I must spend on work responsibilities.	.73	.74		
SB_WIF1	When I get home from work I am often too frazzled to participate in family activities/ responsibilities.	.71	.76		
SB_WIF3	Due to all the pressures at work, sometimes when I come home I am too stressed to do the things I enjoy.	.77	.89		
BB_WIF1	The problem-solving behaviours I use in my job are not effective in resolving problems at home.	.76	.77		
BB_WIF2	Behaviour that is effective and necessary for me at work would be counterproductive at home.	.75	.76		
BB_WIF3	The behaviours I perform that make me effective at work do not help me to be a better parent and spouse.	.83	.85		
TW_WIF1	My work keeps me from my family activities more than I would like.	.58	-		
SB_WIF2	I am often so emotionally drained when I get home from work that it prevents me from contributing to my family.	.63	-		
Achieved Fit Indices					
	CMIN/DF ( $\chi^2$ /df)	CFI	GFI	RMSEA	SRMR
Initial	3.307 (79.360/24)	.936	.950	.095	.047
Final	3.291 (38.399/11)	.955	.967	.078	.037
Composite Construct Reliability .78					

## Appendix 10:

### Summary of Initial Findings (CFA): Family Interference with Work

Quest. Items	Item wording	Initial Standardise Loadings	Final Standardised Loadings		
TB_FIW1	The time I spend on family responsibilities often interferes with my work responsibilities.	.78	-		
TB_FIW2	The time I spend with my family often causes me not to spend time in activities at work that could be helpful to my career.	.81	-		
TB_FIW3	I have to miss work activities due to the amount of time I must spend on family responsibilities.	.76	-		
SB_FIW1	Due to stress at home, I am often preoccupied with family matters at work.	.84	-		
SB_FIW2	Because I am often stressed from family responsibilities, I have a hard time concentrating on my work.	.80	-		
SB_FIW3	Tension and anxiety from my family life often weakens my ability to do my job.	.79	-		
BB_FIW1	The behaviour that works for me at home do not seem to be effective at work.	.76	-		
BB_FIW2	Behaviour that is effective and necessary for me at home would be counterproductive at work.	.72	-		
BB_FIW3	The problem-solving behaviour that works for me at home does not seem to be as useful at work.	.75	-		
Achieved Fit Indices					
	CMIN/DF ( $\chi^2$ /df)	CFI	GFI	RMSEA	SRMR
Initial	1.076 (25.831/24)	.992	.982	.016	.036
Final	-	-	-	-	-
Composite Construct Reliability .76					

## Appendix 11:

### Summary of Initial Findings (CFA): Affective Organisational Commitment

Quest.  Items	Item wording	Initial Standardise Loadings	Final Standardised Loadings		
A_OC1	I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organisation.	.74	.76		
A_OC2	I really feel as if this organisation’s problem are my own.	.81	.84		
A_OC4	I do not feel “emotionally attached” to this organisation.	.78	.80		
A_OC6	This organisation has a great deal of personal meaning for me.	.75	.77		
A_OC3	I do not feel a strong sense of “belonging” to my organisation.	.42	-		
A_OC5	I do not feel “part of the family” at my organisation.	.46	-		
Achieved Fit Indices					
	CMIN/DF ( $\chi^2$ /df)	CFI	GFI	RMSEA	SRMR
Initial	133.623 (1202.603/9)	.277	.547	.647	.340
Final	1.176 (2.353/2)	.920	.960	.024	.015
Composite Construct Reliability .73					

## Appendix 12:

### Summary of Initial Findings (CFA): Continuance Organisational Commitment

Quest. Items	Item wording	Initial Standardise Loadings	Final Standardised Loadings		
C_OC2	It would be very hard for me to leave my organisation right now, even if I wanted to.	.83	.87		
C_OC3	Too much of my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave my organisation now.	.78	.79		
C_OC5	If I had not already put so much of myself into this organisation, I might consider working elsewhere.	.82	.85		
C_OC6	One of the few negative consequences of leaving this organisation would be the scarcity of available alternatives.	.77	.82		
C_OC1	Right now, staying with my organisation is a matter of necessity as much as desire.	.79	-		
C_OC4	I feel that I have too few options to consider leaving this organisation.	.81	-		
Achieved Fit Indices					
	CMIN/DF ( $\chi^2$ /df)	CFI	GFI	RMSEA	SRMR
Initial	77.351 (696.155)	.816	.726	.491	.086
Final	1.790 (12.530/7)	.921	.903	.050	.003
Composite Construct Reliability .92					

### Appendix 13:

#### Summary of Initial Findings (CFA): Normative Organisational Commitment

Quest. Items	Item wording	Initial Standardise Loadings	Final Standardised Loadings		
N_OC2	Even if it were to my advantage, I do not feel it would be right to leave my organisation now.	.76	.78		
N_OC3	I would feel guilty if I left my organisation now.	.82	.84		
N_OC4	This organisation deserves my loyalty.	.70	.72		
N_OC5	I would not leave my organisation right now because I have a sense of obligation to the people in it.	.71	.73		
N_OC6	I owe a great deal to my organisation.	.79	.82		
N_OC1	I do not feel any obligation to remain with my current employer.	.59			
Achieved Fit Indices					
	CMIN/DF ( $\chi^2$ /df)	CFI	GFI	RMSEA	SRMR
Initial	15.265 (137.385/9)	.931	.878	.212	.042
Final	2.419 (12.097/5)	.940	.960	.067	.015
Composite Construct Reliability .77					

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## Appendix 14:

### Summary of Initial Findings (CFA): Altruism Dimension of OCB

Quest. Items	Item wording	Initial Standardise Loadings	Final Standardised Loadings		
ALT_OCB1	I act as a 'peacemaker' when others in the organisation have disagreements.	.75	-		
ALT_OCB2	I take steps to try to prevent problems with other personnel in the organisation.	.78	-		
ALT_OCB3	I am a stabilising influence in the organisation when disagreement occurs.	.84	-		
Achieved Fit Indices					
	CMIN/DF ( $\chi^2$ /df)	CFI	GFI	RMSEA	SRMR
Initial	4.059 (8.118/2)	.946	.952	.062	.027
Final	-	-	-	-	-
Composite Construct Reliability .81					

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### Appendix 15:

#### Summary of Initial Findings (CFA): Civic Virtue Dimension of OCB

Quest. Items	Item wording	Initial Standardise Loadings	Final Standardised Loadings		
CV_OCB1	I attend and actively participate in organisation meetings.	.56	-		
CV_OCB2	I attend information sessions that agents are encouraged but not required to attend.	.48	-		
CV_OCB3	I attend functions that are not required but help organisation image.	.50	-		
Achieved Fit Indices					
	CMIN/DF ( $\chi^2$ /df)	CFI	GFI	RMSEA	SRMR
Initial	2.332 (4.664/2)	.915	.960	.065	.015
Final	-	-	-	-	-
Composite Construct Reliability .76					



## Appendix 16:

### Summary of Initial Findings (CFA): Sportsmanship Dimension of OCB

Quest. Items	Item wording	Initial Standardise Loadings	Final Standardised Loadings		
SP_OCB1	I focus on what is wrong with the organisation rather than the positive side of it.	.83	-		
SP_OCB2	I tend to make problems bigger than they are at work.	.87	-		
SP_OCB3	I always find fault with what the organisation is doing.	.84	-		
Achieved Fit Indices					
	CMIN/DF ( $\chi^2$ /df)	CFI	GFI	RMSEA	SRMR
Initial	2.876 (2.876/1)	.916	.904	.077	.028
Final	-	-	-	-	-
Composite Construct Reliability .86					

## Appendix 17:

### Summary of Initial Findings (CFA): Conscientiousness Dimension of OCB

Quest. Items	Item wording	Initial Standardise Loadings	Final Standardised Loadings		
CO_OCB1	I am one of the most hardworking employees in the organisation.	.74	-		
CO_OCB2	I believe in giving an honest day's work for an honest day's pay.	.59	-		
CO_OCB3	My attendance at work is above the norm.	.82	-		
CO_OCB4	I do not take extra breaks.	.68			
CO_OCB5	I obey organisation's rules and regulations even when no one is watching.	.54			
Achieved Fit Indices					
	CMIN/DF ( $\chi^2$ /df)	CFI	GFI	RMSEA	SRMR
Initial	2.245 (11.226/5)	.981	.904	.061	.028
Final	-	-	-	-	-
Composite Construct Reliability .80					

## Appendix 18:

### Summary of Initial Findings (CFA): Courtesy Dimension of OCB

Quest. Items	Item wording	Initial Standardise Loadings	Final Standardised Loadings		
CT_OCB2	I consider the impact of my actions on co-workers.	.82	.83		
CT_OCB3	I do not abuse the rights of others.	.76	.79		
CT_OCB4	I take steps to try to prevent problems with other co-workers.	.72	.73		
CT_OCB5	I am mindful of how my behaviour affects other people's jobs.	.74	.76		
CT_OCB1	I try to avoid creating problems for co-workers.	.41	-		
Achieved Fit Indices					
	CMIN/DF ( $\chi^2$ /df)	CFI	GFI	RMSEA	SRMR
Initial	10.228 (28.146/5)	.910	.724	.982	.049
Final	1.172 (2.345/2)	.924	.961	.023	.019
Composite Construct Reliability .72					

**Appendix 19:**  
**The Fully Tested Proposed Modified Model**

